A NATURE MYSTIC'S CLUE

DWIGHT GODDARD

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Religion
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It is sent to

Rev. Chas. S. Nash

with the good wishes of the author,

Dwight Goddard

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By
DWIGHT GODDARD

Pacific School of Religion Berkeley, Calif.

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INTRODUCTION

ANY philosophy of life, and especially one that is based, as this one is, on Love, must be presented as a story. Love so enters into the smallest detail of life that it can not be disentangled even for the purpose of philosophical discussion. More than any other fact or circumstance, Love conditions health, success, happiness, spiritual vision and illumination.

Life is so ever-changing, it cannot truly be understood by attempting to hold it off at arm's length and examine it as though it was a static thing. One must immerse himself in its flow, submit to its indescribable caress trustingly, if he is to experience its real spirit. The supremacy of Love can never be proven with any degree of satisfaction by dialectics alone, because Love includes something more than reason, namely, desire. The intellectual faculties are designed primarily for the conservation of the physical life; the senses, brain, glands, at best can only give a distorted and discolored view of life and thus can only spin a web of conjecture about it. Logical processes of reasoning are extremely untrustworthy unless frequently checked

up by an ever new appeal to experience. Of far more value in seeking the meaning of life is a soul attitude of faith, love, gratitude, humility, which keeps the channels of whatever faculties one has open and clear for the inflow and ebb of Truth itself. A habit of quiet meditation grounded in such an attitude gives one the freest access and highest sensitiveness to reality.

With this in mind, the writer has interwoven the narrative of David Lisle's birth and inheritance, his childish experiences and dreams, his love affairs and success, with his mature visions and thoughts. The writer has no conceit as to his ability to do the task with any degree of artistic skill or living touch, he only feels a compulsion to do it as best he may.

The task is this: to show that behind life there is a law of causation that is universal in its reach, that behind this law there is a Principle that is ultimate. This Ultimate Principle is Love. This profound truth has been crowded into the background of the world's thought to an almost unbelievable degree; in fact, the world seems willing to believe almost anything else but the supremacy of Love. And yet, if the world is ever to come to a saving knowledge it must see Love, as David Lisle saw it, not as mere sentiment, not as a good pragmatic rule, not even as the ideal of religion, but as the animating spirit of the Universe, its very Basic Principle, fundamental, supreme, ultimate.

David's mother shows the soul yielding trustfully to Love's cosmic call; Mary shows Love mistakenly repressed; Annie shows Love in abandon and license; Grace shows Love trusted for its emotional delight; Ailene shows Love trusted for its spiritual illumination and joy, as well as for its physical delight.

CHAPTER ONE

David Lisle's father was a Canadian woodsman who had come down into Maine for the better wages that could be secured. He was about twenty-eight years of age, tall, muscular and handsome, a chopper in winter and a guide in the hunting camps in summer. He dearly loved the woods and never tired of the rough, hard work, the isolation, or the exposure. There was a tradition in his family that they had descended from one of the early *grand seigniors*, through a love experience with an Indian maiden. She had been abandoned with her little baby boy on a lonely island where the settlers had found her. They gave the boy the name, David L'isle, and he grew up with them.

David's mother was descended from a good English family, through a "younger son" who had come to America as a sailor and had settled near Boston. She was exceptionally well educated and it was only her inherited love for adventure that had sent her so far afield to be the school teacher in this village on the edge of the great Maine woods. She was young and attractive in appearance, she loved her work, she loved little children, but most of all she loved the great out-of-doors with its depths of green and fragrant

verdure, its solitudes and its stillness, its lights and its shadows, and its multitudinous life.

The coming of the annual drive of logs to the village sawmill was a great event in the life of the village where David's mother taught. She had gone up the river to watch the logs come down through a narrow, rocky channel and was attracted by the sight of this young Canadian as he balanced on a log in the midst of the rapids. He was so splendidly athletic and handsome that she could not take her eyes from him and when he waved his hand to her alone on the bank, she unwittingly waved back. She blamed herself for this indiscretion and determined if he followed it up that she would most certainly repel his advances. One day she noticed that he was waiting outside the school and she planned words of disdain and dismissal. But she had no chance to use them for, when he came forward courteously and friendly, it was to offer her a bunch of most fragrant arbutus. The shy, pink blossoms were never more delicate, nor their illusive fragrance more exquisite. She could not resist the friendly offering and her eyes sparkled with more than ordinary thanks. Later on, when he called at the school for her, she found herself going to walk with him and enjoying his abounding jollity and zest, as though they were long time friends. In their sport he suddenly caught her in his arms and kissed her. She knew that

she ought to resent it, and determined that she would if he attempted it again, but the tiny thrill of it haunted her. It seemed to awaken something in her of which she had been unconscious before, something that hungered for protection and loving care and affection. There came over her spirits a comfortable feeling as though some Unseen Presence had brought them together and was planning for their future in infinite love and goodwill. A few days later, when they were again out walking, she nearly stepped on a snake hidden in the grass; in sudden fright she cried out and threw her arms about his neck. He saw what was the matter, contemptously kicked it out of the path, and went on chatting as though nothing had happened. A little later they came to a swampy place too wet for her to cross and without a word he took her in his arms and carried her over. But on the other side he laughingly refused to put her down until she had kissed him for his trouble. She refused at first, but with no resentful thoughts and a kind of sinking feeling because she knew that if he insisted she would have to do it. She was confident that he would insist, and it made her strangely happy. The little tumult in her heart between decorum and desire was reflected in her eyes and trembly lips, and, when he lifted his lips in laughing confidence, she just had to kiss him. His response was an impetuous

hug and kisses on face and neck wherever he could reach her in the struggle that followed. It was soon over and they were again soberly sauntering along talking of inconsequential things, but within her heart was going pit-a-pat and she felt again that wonderful thrill; she had to confess to herself it was what she had hoped for all along.

There were other equally pleasant walks and gradually she found herself looking forward to his coming. One evening, just before school closed for the summer, he came to the house where she boarded and asked her to come out for a little as he had something of importance to tell her. The night was beautifully still and clear and they rested where the whole valley lay spread out and slumbering below them. He said that he must leave on the morrow for the hunting camp where he was to be employed for the summer. He told her simply and tenderly of his love for her and asked her to marry him on his return in the fall. She had been expecting this avowal for some time and had tried to understand her own mind. She liked his friendly, courteous ways and good spirits; she was conscious of an answering thrill to his attractive personality, his splendid stature and strength, and, above all, she felt constrained by some strange but charming desire for his care and love, yes, for *him*. She recognized very clearly the

dangers and difficulties that lay ahead and the adjustments that would have to be made because of their very different connections; at the same time she recognized that she needed him if ever again she was to be fully satisfied. She explained that she would be leaving for her home in a few days, and while admitting her love for him, asked him to wait for a final answer on her return in the fall. On the way back to the house she felt free to show him more of the depth and warmth of love and affection that was latent in her nature only waiting to be awakened by his love, so she shyly but gladly yielded to his advances and rested sweetly in his arms. Unwittingly she began to speak in French, which she knew quite well. He was completely captivated with surprise and delight to find that she could speak his mother tongue; his joy already full because of her avowal now overflowed as her caresses answered his in unrestrained delight.

As soon as school closed for the summer she returned to her home north of Boston and told her father and mother of the proposal. It was as she feared it might be; they not only disapproved but were insistent that she should not marry him. The summer that followed was very, very hard. She tried to renew old acquaintances but everywhere felt a barrier as she inclined to act as her heart desired. She visited the familiar and beautiful places on the rocky

shores of the Atlantic but only to feel keenly the contrast of the cold and restless wash of its never-ending waves, with the quiet and serene loveliness of the Northern woods. Everywhere she was confronted with a choice: the choice of a conventional and known life of New England culture, or the freedom and emotion and self-sacrifice of a pioneer life on the frontier of an unknown land. One promised ease, comfort, agreement; the other labor, deprivation, uncertainty, but with it, *love*. She chose the way of love! When the time to return arrived, the parting was very hard. Her father and mother were bitter and insistent that if she married him it would mean the loss of all her home ties; her mother passionately exclaimed, "If you marry this illiterate, French Canadian Catholic, you need never write to me again." Her father added coldly, "And you need never expect a penny of my property."

On the long, slow journey back to school her heart was very heavy and the tears would come. She loved her father and mother and knew that their course was dictated wholly by their concern for her welfare, but it was conditioned by pride and prejudice. At last the thickly settled towns and villages were left behind, and they entered the long stretches of hills and wooded valleys, and with them the balance of emotion shifted from the pain of parting to the joy of reunion.

The verse came to her, "*For this cause shall she leave her father and mother and cleave unto her husband, and they shall be one flesh.*" And another verse followed like a benediction, "*The God of love and peace shall go with you.*"

They were married in the late fall and went at once to the lumber camp for the winter. They could carry with them for the long cold months only necessary things; their warm clothing and blankets and a very few extras. As befitted a woodsman, he had almost nothing but his axe, a gun, and his violin; but she took a few books, some paper pictures, cheese cloth for curtains and a sketch book. It took but a couple of days to throw together a little one-room shack under the sheltering trees and not far from the cook house of the camp. There was little in it but a box stove big enough to hold chunks that would burn all night, a table, a bunk with hay for a mattress, an old rocking chair and benches for seats. They had their meals with the men in the cook house; she usually ate with the two other women, who also were spending the winter in the woods with their husbands, either before or after the men. The women visited during the day, did the necessary mending for their men, and helped with odd jobs for the common comfort. In the evening when the men were present they were glad enough to go to their shack to escape the tobacco smoke and rough horseplay.

In spite of the isolation and discomforts, they enjoyed the evenings together; the little shack was warm and cosy; David would play away on his violin, or listen while she read from her books. Each so loved the other that they could truly enter into enjoyment of the things that interested or pleased the other. David easily and gladly learned the lessons she saw that he needed to be a more efficient woodsman, and never resented or held back from profiting from her better education. Thus he gained in poise and self respect by learning how to keep a time book, a pay roll, how to figure lumber and write a report. On her part she tried to curb her New England ambition and activity to meet his evident delight after a hard day's work of just sitting and enjoying an hour's quiet before bedtime. In marrying him she had had misgivings as to whether their very different intellectual training and their different religions would in time reveal conditions that would be irksome; but to her unbounded delight the passing weeks revealed such an inherent fineness of soul that her love for him deepened and unfolded beyond her hopes.

It seemed at times as though he had an uncanny power of matching the varied sounds about them on his violin. There were many birds notes that he could mimic perfectly; and sounds of wind in the trees, falling water, and the ring

of axes in the distant chopping. But the greatest delight came when she found that in a crude and imperfect manner he could give parallels of thought to the different sounds. The wind in the hemlocks, he said, had a different meaning from wind in the pines. It gave her real joy to find that she could look up to him in many ways as her superior. This was especially true in his handling of affairs; although young he was often chosen to take a gang of men for special work and could be depended on for good judgment and faithfulness. All this and his splendid physique and sunny, affectionate ways commanded her love and happiness.

The weeks passed very happily and before winter had set in in earnest she had lost her fear of the cold, or isolation, or the future. There was one day about Thanksgiving time that was of especial significance. The day had broken clear and cold after some hours of snow. Just after dinner they brought back to the bunk house the poor broken body of one of the choppers who had been crushed by a falling tree. It was the first accident of the season and it depressed her very much, but she did her part in caring for him and sitting by him until it could be arranged to send him to the settlement. But it worried her and when David came to the cabin after supper she clung to him very closely and, understanding how nervously unstrung she was, he was exceptionally

tender with her. They went to bed early and as usual he went to sleep at once, but she lay awake for a long time trying not to disturb her husband but feeling very lonely and homesick. At last she went to sleep, but toward morning was awakened by the roar of the wind in the trees overhead, the night that had set in clear and cold was now lashed by a sudden, brief tempest. Suddenly a falling branch struck the roof and frightened her beyond control. She awoke David and with a sigh of relief nestled in his arms. He talked to her and caressed her as she loved to be caressed, until her tired nerves were quieted. Her heart, already filled with grateful love, awoke to an overwhelming desire for him; and to him she seemed very precious in her sweet, affectionate clinging. Their souls caught the rhythm of Love's universal melody; theirs was a foretaste of the ecstasy of the life above. . . . They fell asleep in each other's arms, all unconscious of the benediction of that unseen Presence that had so strangely directed their steps from the beginning, and whose purpose had now come to its term.

Slowly the winter passed and as soon as the pond began to rise from the spring rains and float the logs, camp was broken and they returned to the settlement. David rented a small place, planted a garden, chopped some wood and then went off to the camp where he was employed as

a guide. Before he returned in the fall, our David was born. Never was a prouder father nor a happier mother. They spent a happy month together before David had to leave, this time for his winter's work.

While she missed the close companionship of her husband and the simple life of the woods of the last winter, she found endless delight in caring for her baby and watching his growth and development. Along toward spring and without warning, word was brought in from the woods that David had been hurt by the shifting of a load of logs. With sad forebodings she made ready a bed when he should be brought home. The next day word came of his death. He sent her only the briefest message of love and a request that he might be buried in the woods that he loved so dearly.

The spring and summer dragged heavily by. At times she was tempted to return to the city, but her heart was here now, and when she was asked to resume the school in the fall she was glad to do so. For five years she led a busy life in which the care of her child crowded the love of her husband into the background, but it was not forgotten; there were hours in which her loneliness seemed greater than she could bear. Little five-year-old David thrived on the abundance of love that surrounded him, but her health declined from loss of it. During the winter there was a

group of larger boys in the school who wore on her nerves; then she had a succession of colds so that in the month of March she was obliged to give up the school. At first they called it influenza and then pneumonia, but in ten days she fell asleep whispering the one word, "David." Without love, as the summer flowers without the refreshing necessary rain, she had wilted away.

David could not remember very much about his mother, of course, but he never forgot his love for her, nor his sense of loss when she was taken away. In later years he loved to think that from each of his parents he had inherited something of his love for nature, his appreciation of nature's beauty, his keen sense and wonder in the passing moods and phases of the seasons. To them, also, he ascribed his intuitions of Something within and beyond the appearance of things. He always cherished the feeling, when he was deeply moved by any of the beautiful things of nature, that in him his father and mother were enjoying them, and, in a real sense, that he was enjoying them because they were enjoying them with him. This curious sense of mutuality was always present with him and always fascinated him; and, as he yielded himself to it, it seemed to lead him into ever-increasing beauty and experience.

CHAPTER TWO

David's mother had a sister who had married a man considerably older than herself, who was the head farmer on a fine estate in the Berkshires. They had no children of their own, and when she returned from attending the funeral of her sister, she took the little boy, David, with her as her own. This estate, that became David's home thereafter, included hundreds of acres of woods, pasture, and fields, besides the immediate grounds of the mansion. On the highway, nearer the village, was the farmhouse where David's aunt lived. On the side farther from the village was a road that led off to a neighboring town, and on this road, adjoining the estate and forming a part of it, were several hundred acres of forest surrounding a pond of some fifty acres, that was called the Pond Woods. There was a wood road about a quarter of a mile long that led from the highway to the pond, following the contour of the land. The pond was fed from never failing springs back in the hills, by a little brook that came down to the pond by the side of the wood road. The shores of the pond were clear except at the lower end where the pond widened out over a natural meadow. The water had originally been held back by a beaver dam which had been raised and

strengthened to make the pond of its present size. Where the road and the brook came down to the pond there was a gently sloping field, that was shaded by fine old pine trees, the further side of which was bounded by a precipitous ledge that rose to the treetops and provided a lookout over the whole. The ledge jutting out into the pond made a little bay with a sandy beach. We have described this at length because it played a very important part in David's after life. For a long time he did not know where his parents were buried—he had been told that it was in the woods on the shores of a big pond—and for some reason he fancied that their spirits hovered near this pond, so as to be near him. As he grew older he had an increasing fondness for these woods and at last they became his very own.

The owner of the estate was a Mr. Madison, a merchant of New York, a large, fine looking man, kind-hearted and considerate. He liked the place very much and enjoyed getting away from the rush and strain of the city to its quiet beauty. Mrs. Madison was rather more formal in her manner; she was kind-hearted, also, but very religious and reserved. Our larger interest lies in their only child, Mary, who was fourteen years of age when David came to live at the farm.

David never forgot his first visit to the pond with Mary. They set off in high glee; the beauty of the road through the deep woods, the mur-

muring brook as it fell from rock to rock on its way to the pond, the pine-shaded slope and the cool pond rippling in on its sandy shore, indelibly impressed itself on his childish mind. Mary was fine company, letting him run here and there and playing games with zest and laughter. After a time she put on her bathing suit and helped him to undress and they splashed about as she gave him a first lesson in swimming. After that they sat under the pine trees with his head resting against her while she told him stories and asked him about his mother and home. As he looked up to her, she seemed like a grown woman with lovely eyes and fluffy hair. She said that she wanted him to love her. He just naturally put his little arms about her neck and they kissed each other in pledge of this new and special love. He had become a little tired and when he began to tell her more about his mother he felt queer and began to cry. She took him in her lap and comforted him, and in a little while they were on their way home laughing and happy. Ever after, this memory of Mary with its background of the beautiful Pond Woods was his especial treasure.

The next day, in the late afternoon, Mary came for him in her dog-cart. She had brought a lunch and said that they could stay and see the sunset and hear the evening birds. They hitched the pony among the pine trees, spent a little time

getting him some fresh grass to eat, and then they climbed the ledge to the top. They were high above the woods and could see away off over the pond to the hills beyond. There was a cool breeze that came from the meadow at the lower end of the pond laden with its sweet fragrance, and the sky was all alight with the setting sun. Near the edge of the cliff they found an open space covered with dry moss, just the place for their lunch. They were very happy and found many things to laugh at. After lunch they sat in the twilight listening to the evening birds, enjoying most of all the clear sweet call of the evening thrush. Again and again it rose flutelike, sometimes sounding near by and then answered from far away. The tree tops were rustling softly, everything was full of charm and they waited in wonder as to what new beauty was still to come. Mary asked, "David, do you ever dream?"

"Yes, Miss Mary, I dream most every night; last night I had a very clear one."

Mary said, "Let us tell each other our dreams; what was yours?"

Then David told her his dream. "I saw my mother climbing a hill as if following some one higher up; I thought that it was my father, although I did not see him and would not know him if I did. Every little while mother would turn and beckon me to follow and would point

up to where father was. What did the dream mean, Miss Mary?"

"How should I know what your dream meant, laddie? Let me tell you my dream, perhaps you can explain that. I seemed to be away off in space with nothing about me and I could see very far away, and it was night and dark only everything was clear for the stars were shining. At first the stars seemed stationary but as I watched them I saw that they were really moving and swinging in circles, interweaving and forming very beautiful combinations. Then I could see that they were not just scattered about, but were grouped into designs like snowflakes made up of points of light. Now and then single stars would dart out of one design and join another that had swung near; and with its going the design it had left would change into a simpler one, and the group it had joined would change into a more complex design. Sometimes whole groups of stars would unite with other groups and the new combination would always be more beautiful than either alone. It seemed as though I was in the center of one of these groups, only now they were not stars at all, but were little boys and girls playing games. There was one boy near me that I liked and he saw me, but he could not leave his design and I could not leave mine. I wanted to go to him very much and as I felt that way I suddenly

saw about us—only a great way off—a vague 'form.' The boy saw it too and tried to call my attention to it. The dream was very clear for a time and then faded away. The boy looked like you, Davey, and just as the dream faded away I felt sure it was you."

When she had finished they were surprised to see how dark it had become; they hurried down to get the pony and it was not long before they were home. Some nights David was very lonely for his mother, but after this he always had the memory of Mary to comfort him.

There is no reason nor space to describe the happy years that followed. The winters were filled with school and work at home; the summers by gradually increasing hours of work and bright spots of pleasure and excitement with the coming of the family and the irregular outings with Mary. In the earlier years the good times with her were more frequent, but as she grew older were less often and more reserved. When he was ten and she was eighteen she went away to college, and after that she frequently had classmates visit her. He noticed when they were present she was always more restrained with him, but there were times when she would be her old affectionate self; at such times they would often go off together for walks, or to the Pond Woods for a picnic or bathing. At rare times when off berrying, or driving, or gathering wild flowers

she would relax for an hour or two and be very demonstrative and affectionate. As the years sped by, David noticed that these rare hours of relaxation and affection always came when they were alone in the Pond Woods. At such times she would not only permit but would seem to invite his caresses.

Mr. Madison always seemed pleased to see David about the big barns or garden and with him David always felt free and at ease. He would occasionally ask David to go driving with him to hold the horses while he did his errands. On these trips he talked freely, asking questions about David's school and playmates; sometimes he would tell stories of his own boyhood and once he became affected as he spoke of his regret that he had no boy of his own. After one such time, his aunt cautioned David not to presume on this good will, and urged him to be restrained and polite at all times, especially when Mr. Madison was inclined to be most free.

David's fourteenth year, as he looked back over the years, was the ending of his childhood and the beginning of his real life. He had grown to be a tall, dark-complexioned, good-looking boy, with premonitions of unrest against the limits of the farm. When the Madisons came for the summer he was pleased beyond measure to notice the cordiality of their greetings. Mr. Madison shook hands with him and congratu-

lated him on his growth and appearance, even Mrs. Madison was freer than usual in her greeting, but Mary's was best of all. She had graduated from college that spring and with the breaking of college ties seemed to come back to the farm more whole-heartedly. Perhaps it was because he was older himself, that David noticed for the first time her feminine charms and beauty.

For a few days she wanted David to go with her to the favorite walks and drives and they chatted away like the best of friends; then there was a week or two when he saw her only occasionally and at a distance. He was at a loss to explain the change and wondered if he had said or done anything to annoy her; he could not recall anything, in fact the last time they were together she was especially gay and happy. Then one afternoon she came to the garden where he was busy and asked him to go with her to the Pond Woods to find some iris over by the meadow. It was very lovely there, the air was sweet with the fragrance of wild herbs and blossoms, while bob-o-links and red-winged blackbirds were singing all about. She told him of some of the good times she had had at college, and he told her of some books of travel and adventure that he had been reading. She asked him if he had read any love stories yet. He replied that he had begun one but as it was not

very interesting he had given it up. She laughed a little and patted his hand as she said, "Never mind, Davey, it won't be long before you will like them better."

Then they went to the swimming place and were soon having a fine time diving from the wharf, racing and playing games. David was feeling fine after the swim and kneeling by her decorated her hair with the iris. Impulsively he kissed her. Her eyes sparkled and she drew him close to her and kissed him again and again. She was very quiet all the way home, and once he thought he saw tears in her eyes but was not sure. When she reached the house she took the iris and sweet flag and went in without a word; but he had the feeling that she was not at all displeased or unhappy.

After this long to be remembered day there were three or four weeks during which he hardly saw her. David kept at his work on the farm and she went riding with her father or alone. The later part of the summer she had a friend visiting her and during that time she did not avoid him as much but paid him no especial attention. Preparations were being made for the return of the family in the fall when late one afternoon she asked him to go with her for a walk. They took a lunch with them and went far beyond the Pond Woods to a hilltop that gave them a fine view of the sunset; there they ate

their lunch. She was unusually quiet and appeared to be a little ill at ease, so that David was relieved when she suggested their starting back and having a good-bye look from the ledge.

When they reached the woods she took his hand to help her climb the ledge, and talked and laughed more freely. Twilight had begun to fall and they thoroughly enjoyed the evening quiet. She started to tell him of her plans for the winter in the city, but abruptly changed the subject to ask if he had dreamed of late. It happened that he had recently had a variation of his earlier dream, in which there was a suggestion again of his mother standing above him and seeming to call him to come to her. After telling her this he asked her if she had ever had her dream again. She replied that soon after they had gone for the iris she had dreamed it again and it had been very clear. This time instead of seeing points of light circling about her she seemed to be in the midst of a sea of bubbles. There were big ones and little ones that divided and subdivided and formed into curious masses that reflected indescribably beautiful colors. She continued, "I was one of the bubbles and saw you not far away and looking very attractive. We tried to reach each other and, as we did so, we caught sight again of that vague and wonderful 'form,' far away. It seemed to envelop us; a curious

feeling came over me that the 'form' was really myself."

They were silent for a little and impulsively he laid his hand on hers; she clasped it in both of hers and leaned her head against his shoulder. They were quiet for some moments when she said, "Wouldn't you like a swim before we go back? I will stay up here and wait for you."

David went down, undressed and swam out into the pond. It took some time and when he came back he did not see her up on the ledge, and wondered what had become of her. He was taken by surprise as he reached inshore to see her swimming near by, her white body shining in the dusk and shadows of the overhanging trees. They swam together for a few minutes and then she said they ought to be going home. As they reached shallow water she playfully splashed him and in the scuffle that followed she clung very closely to him. Once their eyes met and he noticed how bright and shiny they were. They scrambled out of the water hand in hand. As a child he had seen her body many times, but to-night her form seemed a revelation of beauty. The sight and touch of her sent a thrill, that was new and entrancing, through his whole body.

She dropped on the sand as she was and he knelt at her side still holding her hand. She laughed shyly and let him caress and fondle her

cheeks and breast and body. When he leant over to kiss her she threw both arms about him and drew him to her. Neither spoke for a moment as they lay clasped in each other's arms; then he felt her body tremble against his and relax. An ashamed feeling came over him, he feared that he had displeased her and that she would scold him, but when she turned her face he saw the sweetest look that he had ever seen in her beautiful eyes. With a shy, sweet laugh, she clung to him for a moment longer and then said, with a little frightened catch in her voice, "Oh Davey, what have we done?"

It took only a few moments to dress; when they met she said shamefacedly, "I have done something very wrong; I don't know what you will think of me; you must promise never to speak of it to any one. You will promise, won't you, Davey?"

"Of course I will keep it secret, Miss Mary. But I love you so much; won't you marry me when I grow up? Please?"

"David, lad, I am ever so much older than you. Before you are old enough to marry you may feel very different."

"But, Miss Mary, if you are not married when I grow up, may I ask you then?"

"Yes, Davey, but remember your promise not to speak of it to anyone. And remember, I am the one to blame, not you."

"No, no, Miss Mary, we aren't either of us to blame; it just happened, the way God lets things happen. You must never think of blame; we haven't done anything really wrong. Just be thankful for everything; I am, and I am always happy."

"Oh, Davey, you are such a nice lad. I wish that I could feel as you do. Now we must hurry home. Davey, I want—what will you think of me—let me kiss you once more."

It was the last time for many years.

CHAPTER THREE

The next day, because of the confusion incident to the departure of the family for the city, David had no opportunity to speak with Mary. As the train drew in she turned to him and whispered, "Don't forget your promise. I will write to you. Good-bye."

In a few days the letter came. She had written him occasionally during previous years but not often enough for him to expect a letter; this time she wrote at length and in a way that made him feel more grown up. Most of the letter was given up to a description of a dream which she had had. It was a similiar dream to the others only this time, instead of stars or bubbles, she was in the midst of funny looking objects like little balloons. They had no heads nor hands nor feet, but could push out heads or hands or feet wherever they needed them. They played games and rolled about in a kind of ocean, up or down or sideways. When they were hungry they rolled about until they came up against some little bit that looked nice which they would swallow by just enveloping it. They had a funny way of playing tag; when one was tagged it would grow small about the middle, divide, and then there would be two of them just alike.

They would form little colonies that would work and play together; some of these colonies would become very skilful in united action; some could absorb light better than others, some were particularly adept in capturing food. She continued, "You were not very far away and this time we almost spoke with each other and we really understood a good deal. We were very happy together in our play and, in the midst of our happiness we were conscious again of that obscure 'form' that was far away and very vast, and which, again, I felt to be my real self." She closed the letter by saying, "The secret is troubling me continually, making me ashamed and afraid. I did very wrong, especially to you, but you must never refer to it to anyone." David answered the letter but she did not reply until Christmas time, when she sent him a nice pair of skates and a friendly letter about the interesting things of the city.

About February there came a letter that was very different. She wrote at length about attending a series of revival meetings and that she had been convicted of sin and converted. She spoke of how wicked she had been, what a carnal thing they had done, and urged him to read his Bible every day and pray God to bring him to repentance.

This was the beginning of a very disturbing year. David had been in the habit ever since

coming to the farm of attending church and Sunday school but had never become interested. Hitherto he had thought very little about God and his own religious condition, but after this letter these things occupied more of his thoughts. His love for Mary led him to honestly try to understand what she had in mind, but for a long time the only result was confusion of thought and unrest of mind, and a feeling of resentment against Mary and people in general.

David had always loved nature; to him the great out-of-doors seemed very beautiful and good and companionable. Now he felt, if he believed what Mary wanted him to, that he must give up his childish trust in the goodness of nature and forever after be questioning and doubting and groping in fog and uncertainty. He instinctively rebelled against this. Generally when he was out in the sunlight or the woods they steadied him, but in the village, or at church, or school, or night the doubts would steal back and annoy him. About the particular good time that so distressed Mary, he was also confused. Hitherto the memory of it had made him happy, it made him love her more, and to his boyish ignorance and inexperience seemed something precious and beautiful and very secret. He hated to think otherwise and he resented her appeal; it made him dislike her for the first time. As the winter passed the disturbing thoughts grew increasingly

more so and certain experiences at school added to his perplexity and unhappiness. During the winter there was a new boy at school who started a habit of telling unclean stories, and he learned of facts of which he had hitherto been ignorant; this particularly added to his fears and uncertainties. He wondered if ever again he could meet Mary without embarrassment and dislike. It was in this frame of mind that he waited her coming the next summer.

In due time she came and they met without any especial emotion. She appeared older and while her greeting was pleasant she seemed a little more condescending than formerly, and for some days she ignored him. She took a class in the village Sunday school and was very earnest all that summer in attendance and effort. It must have been two weeks after her arrival that she asked David to drive with her. Almost immediately she began to talk about their secret; it was evident that she had forced herself to this talk as a duty to herself and to David. She tried to show him how awful was their sin, and how terrible would be the result if he did not repent. She spoke at length of her conversion and of how the Lord had forgiven her and given her peace. She said that the Lord had laid it on her heart to save him. David felt resentful and stubborn and did not know what to say. He resented her effort to make wicked and hateful

what he believed to be innocent and beautiful, and what he cherished as one of the dearest memories of his life. He said very little, and tried to be respectful, but she saw that she had failed in her object. On the way home she made another effort, but as he did not respond they rode the rest of the way in silence.

After a week or two she made another effort but as this time she was more sympathetic in trying to show wherein they had done wrong, David found it easier to explain his own reasons why he did not, and could not, feel as she wished him to. One or two things that he said, while not convincing her, led her to think along a different line, and when he spoke of how he cherished the memory of their secret she seemed touched and a little wistful. She asked if he would like to go to the Pond Woods with her. He was pleased because he had noticed that they always got along better when they entered its magic borders. They went up to the ledge and after a little she asked him what he thought of God. The question confused him because he had never thought logically about Him, so he evaded the question by asking her to tell what she thought Him to be.

She was silent for a time and then began very carefully as though she thought very much depended on her words. The picture that he received was this: God is a great Sovereign on a throne in heaven. He is the Creator, the Law-

maker, the Judge of all things and all people. His will is absolute and when we do wrong, whether intentionally or otherwise, His righteous anger must punish us now and in eternity. He can condemn or forgive as He sees fit. We are born in sin and by nature are desperately wicked; especially are we prone to lust after carnal things and to fall into temptations of the flesh. Our only hope lies in faith in Jesus as a Divine Savior, backed up by repentance and prayer for forgiveness.

As she had been talking David's eyes had been roving over the beautiful landscape. There came to them the fragrance of fern and blossom, the little sounds of rustling leaves, the soft sighing of the pine trees, the twittering of the birds, all combining to give him a very different picture of God and His love. When she came to a pause, they were silent for a time, for she, too, when she let her mind rest from its tangle of ideas, felt the charm and beauty of nature. She said more gently, "David, I wish you would tell me what you think of God."

David's extreme love for nature had come with his very life from his father and mother, but that inherent love had been intensified by his own experience of nature's solitudes and vastness, her shelter and companionship, her abundance and beauty. During the past winter he had come to these very woods for comfort and escape from

the perplexing questions that had pressed upon him with the lifting of the veil of moral distinctions. He had built him a little shelter of branches under the wall of the ledge where he could stay, and a little fireplace to keep him warm. Many a time he had found rest and happiness in its shelter and sympathy from the great trees overhead. He wanted to answer Mary, not to prove her in the wrong, but to bring to her his peace of mind and happiness. Almost unconsciously he began to tell her of his love for these very woods and of how real and near God seemed here. When the minister's words perplexed him, here the fact of Someone very near and shadowy and yet very real was a very great comfort and assurance. He felt His love and care in the friendly woods, His vastness in the stars, His glory in the sun. He told her that here any bad feelings he might have had always dropped away. He felt that God's hand was in his and that He had said, "Try again to-morrow, I will help you." He told her of the night after he had received one of her letters and was sad at heart, that he had come here and spent the night in its shelter. The snow was very white and the stars shone like jewels. Suddenly a rabbit hopped noiselessly near and crouched under the shelter of the thick foliage and appeared to enjoy the warmth of the fire. He thought how innocent and dear it

was, and his heart went out in protecting love and care for it; he dropped off to sleep with the thought that God loved and cared for him in the same way.

As he talked he felt Mary's hand steal softly over his shoulder and rest there. Neither spoke for a moment; then he thought he heard her sigh as she withdrew her hand, saying, "David, I wish that I could see as you see, but the Bible says '*The heart is deceitful above all things.*' Don't you think that we did wrong?"

"No, Miss Mary, I do not think that we did wrong. We loved each other and we showed it in a natural way that made us both happy. Weren't you happy, Miss Mary? I was."

"Yes, I was happy until I went to that meeting and the minister showed me how wicked and sinful I was."

"Perhaps he was wrong, Miss Mary."

She sat up rigidly and looked at David with startled eyes, exclaiming, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

David had a curious feeling come over him, as though some evil thing had come between them, and that he must fight to save her. "I am not Satan, Miss Mary. We must not let this evil thing come between us."

"I wish that I could think as you do, David; but I am tired now, let us go home."

After that the summer passed slowly and

unhappily as they gradually drifted apart. Only once after that did she speak to him in a friendly spirit. It was toward the close of the summer when he was at work in the garden. She came into the garden and at first appeared to ignore him, then she gradually approached him and said abruptly, "I had my dream again last night. It was very clear, but you were there and we played together and were very happy. Again we saw the 'form' above and including everything. I asked you what it was and you replied, 'we must search and search and search.' " Then without waiting for a reply she went away.

When the family went away David was more lonely than he expected to be after the way she had treated him during the summer. He went to the woods as often as he could and, as he had given up going to Sunday school, he often staid in the woods from Saturday to Monday morning. His uncle let him cut firewood out there instead of doing it at the house. He enlarged his shelter to a small shack and found an old box stove and some smoke pipe and was never lonely there nor unhappy. The feeling that his father and his mother were there increased; at times he had a creepy feeling that there were other presences about, expecially when he heard the high wind in the trees at night. He was not frightened; it only filled him with awe and a kind of uncertain wonder. He learned to play his father's violin

and would practice by the hour. A plan began to take form in his mind that some day he would go up North to the country where his father and mother were buried, and live by his axe as his father had lived. A habit grew on him also of looking into the fire intently and letting whatever thoughts would come, lap in on the shores of his mind. Some were very curious and odd thoughts, about fairies and gnomes and wood sprites; and some were about Mary and her dream children, and some were about God. The familiar dream of his mother calling him to search would steal into these day dreams, and at one such time the thought came to him clear and definite that what his mother wanted was for him to go to college; with it came the conviction that Mr. Madison would help him and Mary would be pleased.

The following year—his sixteenth—was memorable to David because it brought increased acquaintance and friendship with Mr. and Mrs. Madison. Mary was in Europe with friends and was to be gone for a whole year and being away her father and mother were unusually kind to him and went out of their way to give him pleasure. Mrs. Madison had him drive her about more often and at times would talk with him freely, telling him of Mary's whereabouts and what she was doing. One day near the close of summer she invited him to dinner and after-

wards led him to talk of his hopes and his plans.

With Mr. Madison he became still more friendly. They had always talked together very freely for two of such different ages and when Mr. Madison learned of the shack and of how much time David spent there, he was interested and asked to see it; so one day they drove over and he was as pleased as a boy, saying that he had always had an ambition to build just such a shack himself. They spent an hour there and the older man questioned the younger about the trees and the fishing. After that he came several times during the summer. Once they were caught in a shower; while they waited David caught some fish, and they had a regular camp dinner together. Later Mr. Madison sent over a boat and would occasionally go fishing by himself, or have David row him about as he trolled for pickerel. But best of all was the day he sent over workmen to build a better cabin; it only had one room but it had a fireplace and a bunk with a good mattress, and a porch on the pond side.

One day Mr. Madison mentioned that he was thinking of selling the timber. Impulsively David exclaimed, "Oh don't do that, Mr. Madison. They will spoil the whole place. They will slash everything, big and little, and will leave the brush all about."

Mr. Madison looked surprised at his earnest-

ness and asked him what he would do with it if it was his. David was quiet for a minute, thinking with all his might. He had read a book on forest culture that interested him very much and during the winter evenings he had often thought of how the recommendations of the book could be carried out at the Pond Woods. He suggested to Mr. Madison that instead of taking money out of the woods that he put money into it at first; that he build a rough road about the pond to bring all parts accessible, then gradually cut out the trees as they matured, cleaning up the brush and setting out young trees wherever there was a vacancy. There ought to be better fences to protect it from trespass and fires and it would pay to thin out the crowded trees and brush, then, if there was any money left, build a pretty stone gateway at the entrance. Without thinking, David referred to his love for the woods just as they were. He felt as if his father and mother were there, and if they were good to the place that the place would give happiness to all concerned in it. He felt as though there was a relation that was almost personal between the trees and himself, as though they were looking to him and counting on him to protect their interests, and in return they seemed to give him a kind of happiness that he could not get from people; he felt sure that the trees would never fail to do their part

so long as he was loyal in his love and care for them. Then he told Mr. Madison of his wish to go up to Maine where his parents had lived and were buried; he said that he would like to spend a winter in a logging camp to learn all he could about trees and lumbering.

Mr. Madison was silent for a time, letting his eyes wander over the pond to the woods beyond and coming back to rest on the noble pines about them. He went off by himself up on the ledge, looking all about. When he returned he told David that he had been given some ideas that he would like to think about; there was no hurry about selling the timber and if he wanted to go up North for the winter to get experience in lumbering he would be glad to let him have money for his expenses. David was so pleased and excited that he entirely forgot his manners and danced about like the natural boy that he was. Mr. Madison laughed and said, "You are a good boy, David, and we all like to do things for you and make you happy."

So after haying was over David went up to his old home in Maine. He had no difficulty in finding a lumber boss who would take him on his gang for the winter. Though the work was hard and the food poor the winter passed quickly and pleasantly; he learned a great deal about the different trees, their relative values and the cost of working, and about chopping and handling

logs, and he went back to the farm taller, stronger and more mature. Before he left, however, he visited the grave of his parents. It was on the shore of the lake where the afternoon sun lingered softly. It had been a clearing, but ten years of neglect had brought a growth of spruce that made it difficult to locate the exact spot. He piled more stones on the mound and came away with a lonesome feeling, but was comforted with the thought, the real "they" were with him by his own woods and pond.

The family were already settled when David returned. They gave him a hearty welcome and Mr. Madison took him at once to the Pond Woods to show what had been done while he had been away. A fine stone gateway had been erected at the entrance and there was a trim fence along the highway; the road to the pond had been graded and a beginning had been made on the road about the pond; a little bungalow had also been erected among the pines; so that all in all it was like a new place. They went over to the cabin and, while Mr. Madison smoked, David told him of his experiences during the winter. Mr Madison asked questions and drew him on from one thing to another, at last saying, "David, you have profited in more ways than one by this experience. I must be going now, but before the summer is over we will have another talk about your future."

The meeting with Mary was somewhat puzzling and unsatisfactory. She had never appeared more attractive but there was an air of reserve that baffled him. Her year in Europe had had its effect which was not happy in some respects. Her former interest in the simple details of the farm life was gone now, and in its place was an affected concern for the outward appearance of things; she was more particular about the appearance of the lawn and the flower beds, the harnesses and carriages. Under these circumstances there was little friendly speech with David, much less familiarity, but he did his best to please her by accepting the position she wished him to fill and sought in every way to serve her willingly and cheerfully. More than once he noticed that she was pleased and once she told him so very frankly, but when he replied with something of the old time freedom, she at once resumed her reserve as much as to say that the old friendly relation was ended.

Before the summer was over Mr. Madison had another talk with David in which he asked him what he would like to be when he grew to be a man. David replied at once that he wanted to go to college and learn to be either a naturalist or a forester, but he knew almost nothing as to the cost or what school to go to. Mr. Madison advised him to attend a certain preparatory school and generously offered to pay his expenses.

David had been two months at this school when he was invited to the Madison's city home for Thanksgiving. At first he was confused by the hurrying crowds, and was a good deal awed when he rang the bell of their imposing residence, but the maid who opened the door was one he had known at the farm, which placed him at ease, and Mary was waiting with a cordial welcome. During the day Mary devoted herself to him and showed him some of the interesting places; she took him to Mr. Madison's store where he saw floor after floor of wonderful things, and she left him at the Natural History Museum that he might stay as long as he wished. Here he really enjoyed himself. He soon made the acquaintance of a friendly attendant who guided him about, and at last took him to a kind of workshop where they rested and he told David of his early adventures in far away lands in search of specimens for the museum, which fired David's fancy with visions of what he would like to do later on. Here was something that made even a great city seem worth while, and it finally decided him to stick to his early desire to be a naturalist.

After their hearty Thanksgiving dinner, and they were seated about an open fire, Mr. Madison referred to David's plans for college and asked him whether he would like better to come into the store and learn the business, speaking at

length of its advantages and future possibilities. When he had finished—without giving David a chance to reply—he turned to his wife and said, "What do you think about it, Cornelia?"

Mrs. Madison spoke sensibly as to its advantages, and then said something that touched David's heart and made him love her more than ever. She spoke of his coming to the farm so many years before and of how much they had come to like him, and that it made them want to do for him that which would give him the greatest happiness, as though he were their own son.

Then Mr. Madison turned to Mary. She said, "David and I have been very good friends from the beginning and I have only the best wishes for his success and happiness. Frankly, I don't think that he ever would be happy in the city. The confinement and monotony, the deadness of things that are only to be bought and sold, would become intolerable to him after a time." Turning to her father she said, "Father, if David was your son you would want him to go to college first, wouldn't you? Why not help him through college first and let the question of the store wait."

They all looked at David. For a few moments he could not say a word, so full was his heart with gratitude and happiness. As usual his thoughts wandered away to his beloved woods by the pond; so many happy memories came

floating into his mind; he smiled to himself as he recalled the early days with Mary—the contrast of the little barefoot boy with the same lad now sitting at ease here in this beautiful home. The old habit of sitting quietly by the fire in the old shack, or lounging under the pines looking off to the distant hills, was upon him. Again he felt as if he were enwrapped in the familiar dream of his mother pointing upward and urging him to search and search. He thought that to do this he must be free, and in the city there was no freedom from strain and conformity and illusive promise. He came to himself feeling Mary's hand on his arm, and noticed the friendly smiles with which they awaited his reply.

A little embarrassed, he tried to show them how grateful he was for all their kindness and how much he disliked to do anything contrary to their wishes or advice. Then he told them some of his thoughts and why he thought he would never be happy in the confinement of the big store, or under the nervous strain of the city; he said that he preferred very much to go to college and fit himself to become a naturalist. If Mr. Madison would help him to do this he would appreciate it and would do his very best to make the most that he could of the opportunity.

"All right, David," said Mr. Madison. "You shall have the money to go through college and

become what you want to be, and we shall be just as well pleased with your success as a naturalist as we would be if you became a merchant prince. I love the store; it is second nature to me. You love the woods, so there you belong. From them you bring us a pleasure that is more than you know; we are not disappointed by your choice."

The next four years of David's life passed rapidly by. The interest that the Natural History Museum had for him, determined the college, Columbia. He became quite well acquainted with some of the custodians at the Museum who were glad to give him all the work he could accept.

In his Sophomore year Mrs. Madison died after recurring attacks of influenza. While she retained her reserved manner to the last, she never hid her liking for David. In her will she left "To her dear young friend, David Lisle, the sum of ten thousand dollars." This wholly unexpected gift made him very happy and served as another bond to tie him to the family.

David spent his summers as usual at the farm. He added a bed room to his old shack, which enabled him to fit up the living room more comfortably with writing table and easy chair, and here he lived whenever he returned to the farm. The new bungalow was much used; it was very attractive as it rested against its back-

ground of pines, and it was equally attractive within. There was one large living room occupying the entire front and, opening into it, were two bedrooms and a kitchen. Mary often had friends and house parties at the bungalow for days at a time; if young men were invited, they would occupy it while the young ladies lived at the mansion.

Mary continued to be a puzzle to David. At times she would be very friendly and then without warning would be very reserved, but David always tried to conform to her moods and she appreciated it. She seldom referred to religion after her return from Europe; if she did it was usually on one of these "dark" days; then she might ask if he still remained away from church, or if he still disbelieved in God and sin. On the friendly days, if she referred to religion at all, it would be in the form of some wistful question. Once she confessed that she did not feel so sure as formerly as to the soul's legal relation to God, but could find nothing else that satisfied her mind to take its place. After such doubts she felt more wicked and discouraged; it made her feel that her old faith must be correct and that her doubts were an added sin.

Once she asked him what his fundamental faith was. He replied, "I don't see clearly yet. At times it seems as though the only reasonable basis was a conception of a cosmic energy and

its inherently orderly reactions. Many of the professors hold to such an idea. But when I am alone in the woods and am free to think there comes setting in a great tide of emotion that carries me along, in spite of my mind, to faith in God. But instead of being a transcendent Person, God seems to be a personalized Principle that is everywhere present and forever active. In the presence of This, I do not feel guilty or sinful, but only entangled and limited. When I pray, the most satisfactory prayer is one of silent gratitude for all the good and generous things of life, and a desire to be more free to enjoy them."

"Doesn't that sound rather pagan, David?"

"Yes, Mary, I know it does, but it comes to me just like that. Can you interpret it for me?"

"No, David, you are wiser and better than I; you must help *me*. At times I feel entangled, as you express it, hedged in by taboos and commandments and sinful dispositions; I feel helpless and a very sinful, wicked woman. I try hard to repress the carnal thoughts and desires that flood my mind just as the good thoughts seem to come naturally to you. Why should we feel things so differently? We are both human."

"I can't explain it, Mary, but of this I am sure; that such morbid, self-condemning thoughts are unwise; and if you continue to let them enter and possess your mind, it will mean a disintegra-

tion of your very life. It will certainly mean unhappiness and perhaps sickness. Your minister said every Sunday that God was Love; and yet every Sunday he would go on talking about carnal desires and sinful natures and guilt and punishment. The two do not go together. If God is good and loves his creation he will not be forever condemning and punishing it; He will rather be in the midst of it, conditioning the process, helping it to become more beautiful and free and happy. Don't you think so?"

"Yes, when I listen to you and see your faith, even when it seems most irreligious, I feel that you are right, David, and I long to see as you see. But when I am alone the same old gloomy but convincing thoughts come crowding back. Even mother who was so good and kind was positive that it was so, and to the last she warned me against yielding to carnal desires or doubt. Sometimes I wish that I was back in the days before that revival, when I was free and happy."

The sun had been slowly sinking as they had been talking and as the sky changed its colors and wonders, they ceased talking. David ventured to lay his hand on hers; suddenly she clasped it in hers, drew it to her lips and held it there, nor did she shrink when he drew her to him. For some minutes they remained thus; once he heard a soft sigh as though she was resting happily, then she sprang up suddenly,

saying, "Oh David, I am a weak, wicked woman; we must go home—and don't, don't speak to me." They reached the carriage and drove home in silence, and for days after he hardly saw her. These impulsive changes convinced him that, beneath the surface of her religious ideas and moral scruples, there remained the tender and affectionate heart that he had loved of old.

During these years in New York he went occasionally to the Madison's home. Mr. Madison enjoyed seeing him about and would listen with pleasure to his talk about college affairs. Once he referred to his business and said that conditions were not as good as formerly, that the great department stores were crowding the specialized ones more and more. He added sadly that of late he didn't seem to have the vigor that he formerly had, and if a good opportunity offered he thought that he would sell and retire. He confessed that general conditions now made him feel glad that David had chosen college rather than the store.

As his graduation drew near, David faced the question of the future, with the Madisons. He said that he would like to join an expedition that was being planned to go to the Malay States the following year for scientific research, and use the results as a basis for a doctor's degree. Mr. Madison liked the plan and urged him to do so, but Mary hesitated and asked how long he would be away. He replied that they would be

away about two years, but as he was only twenty-three he must gain considerably more in years and experience before he would be fitted for a professorship, or curator's position. She then admitted that it seemed the best thing to do —in fact the only thing—but added that they would miss him very much. The rest of the evening she was unusually silent, and the thought came over him that, compared with his increasing vigor and physique, she was growing more dependent and frail. He thought he noticed, also, a hint of some unhappiness that was baffling but that she thought must be borne with endurance and in silence.

At graduation both Mr. Madison and Mary were present. Mr. Madison was like a father to him in his pride and pleasure because of the successful graduation. Once when they were alone together Mary told him how glad she was that he had chosen college instead of the store; she added that it had drawn them closer together and lessened the years that separated them. As she said it she let her hand rest on his arm and her eyes were alight with affection.

The time before the sailing of the expedition passed very quickly. David went as assistant entomologist and had promise of liberal credits toward a degree. Mr. Madison and Mary went to the steamer to see him off, and no father or sister were ever more concerned. Mr. Madison's

good-bye was frank and sincere. "Good-bye, David,—I wish I could say, my son—good-bye." David little thought as he shook his hand that it was their final meeting.

Mary's farewell was more strained and confused. At times she would appear affectionate and regretful; at other times she was reserved and there were lines of strain about her mouth and eyes. David wondered what her farewell would be. Would it be formal, or would her natural affection prevail? His eyes sought hers, and for an instant they answered his; then the tired, strained look returned. But the end was impulsive, she kissed him as she had when he was a boy so long ago. There were tears in her eyes, as the steamer drew away—wistful tears that her conscious self could not repress.

CHAPTER FOUR

David's two years in the jungle were interesting, pleasant and profitable; there was some danger, of course, and the climate was very trying; at the end he felt far older and more mature, but spiritually he was still adrift. There had been times of isolation and solitude when thoughts had come that seemed for a time to be illuminating and to bring him nearer a satisfactory orientation of mind; at other times, especially when sitting with the other scientists and discussing things, generally from a materialistic point of view, the old distrust and confusion of mind would return, as though he was on a raft at sea with neither chart nor compass. The other men seemed to favor some mechanistic explanation of the universe, some huge "action, reaction and interaction." There was no one in the party who had any sympathy for David's crude and mystical intuitions of an independent spiritual reality, that conditioned with beneficent purpose the otherwise seemingly blind interaction of energy.

At one place David met a missionary who was different from the conventional ministers that he had known at home in the country churches, being singularly free from hard-and-fast dogmas.

It was a real treat for David to be with him the few times he had the privilege, but he was never with him long enough to get a satisfying answer to some of the deeper puzzles that had baffled him. This missionary believed with David in an independent Spirit, in whose Mind all physical phenomena in their infinite multiplicity and particularity are summed up; and if one could see things from His point of view, all would be seen to be orderly and harmonious. David wanted to talk with him more about this, but there was little opportunity; the missionary suggested that on David's return to New York that he look up his classmate, Reverend Frank Fullerton, who could explain God better than he could.

During the two years, David wrote regularly to Mary and she had written irregularly to him. Her letters were changeable: sometimes they were brief and formal, at other times they were friendly and even affectionate. He had only one letter from Mr. Madison which came during the first year of absence; in it he called David, "his dear boy," and thanked him for the interesting letters he wrote to Mary, expressing the wish that on David's return he would consider their home as his. Then he referred to the sale of his business to one of the large department stores, and to his purpose of disposing of the city residence and making the farm their principal home, living in apartments during winter. A few

months after this a letter from Miss Madison told of the death of her father. She wrote that he had been a good deal troubled over the sale of his business and, with the sale of the residence, found it difficult to adjust himself to the new conditions of leisure. He became very restless and unhappy and it was during one of these spells that his heart had suddenly just ceased to beat. The rest of the letter was in Miss Mary's best mood. She spoke of the lack of any near relatives, of how much her father and mother had thought of him, and that now in her loneliness she turned to him as her nearest friend. She urged David to write frequently, and when he returned to feel that the new apartment, the address of which she included, was to be his home. She added that her father's affairs were in the hands of a trust company and that she would write later as to the disposal of the estate. A week or more later a letter came from Mr. Madison's lawyer advising David that in Mr. Madison's will, among other bequests to friends and servants, there was one to David's uncle of the farm house where he lived, and to David had been bequeathed the Pond Woods and an annuity of a hundred dollars a month. The balance of the estate was left to Miss Madison. The generosity of this gift to David almost took his breath away. A little later a letter from Mary referred to the will and expressed her satisfaction that her

father had remembered him as he had. She added that as long as he was away she was going to make free use of the bungalow at the pond, as she felt sure that he would like to think of her as being there.

David wrote in reply a more affectionate letter than he had ever written before; he told her of his love for her and that on his return he purposed to take advantage of her promise that, when he was grown up, he might ask her to marry him. Her reply came in due time, but to David's dismay he noted that it must have been written during one of the periods of gloomy reserve. She admitted her memory of the early promise, but said that as she was so much older, she being thirty-two to his twenty-four, and as her health was not at all good, she thought that they could most wisely forget the whole subject. She expressed the wish that he would continue to write her about his travels and thoughts, but not to refer to the other matter again. David tried not to let his disappointment keep him from writing regularly and cheerfully; he felt that, alone as she was, he owed it to her in gratitude for all that she and her parents had done for him, but he cherished still the faith and hope founded in true love that when he could return and talk with her he could persuade her to accept him. He had a strange feeling, too, that she was under some physical or mental re-

straint that was slowly killing her, unless he could set her free.

In her final letter that awaited him at the dock, she again urged him to come at once to her home and make her father's old room his own for as long as he cared to occupy it. In the letter was one sentence that was obscure; it might mean only a commonplace expression of politeness, or it might mean much more. The letter had evidently been written in a mood of perplexity, the one side of her mind trying to be restrained, the other side wistful and hungry, just begging for sympathy and companionship and love. This sentence affected David deeply; he determined, if it was at all possible, to win her consent to marriage; if that should fail, he would remain ever faithful as a brotherly friend.

There was the usual bustle and confusion at the wharf. Some of the College and Museum officials were there to welcome back the expedition, and there was much to be done in getting their many trunks and boxes through the customs and safely on the way, so that it was late in the afternoon before David was free to make his way to the address that Mary had given him. An old servant with whom he was acquainted opened the door and gave him a warm welcome. As they were talking, Mary herself appeared.

She was the same only not the same; there was the same pleasant face and reserved bearing,

but pain and care had left lines of strain about the eyes and a slighter figure. Her welcome was somewhat constrained and they conversed at first in a rather formal manner. There was much to tell and she drew him on to talk of his adventures but, as they talked, her eyes deepened in sympathy. She seemed relieved to talk of her father's sickness, but when he mentioned her own ill health and their mutual interest in the Pond Woods, her reserved manner returned. Thinking that she was over tired, David excused himself as if to go, but she insisted that he should take her father's old room, at least for the present. As David was to be busy at the Museum for a time, it was arranged that the servant should get him early breakfasts and then not expect him home until the evening dinner.

David came late in the afternoon of the following day and found Mary in the living room doing some embroidery and appearing more like her old self. They had a pleasant dinner together, laughing and talking about things of common interest. After dinner she invited him to go with her to a concert. She seemed proud to introduce him to her friends and was evidently pleased to see the respect shown him. It was not to be wondered at, because David had matured in both mind and body; he was tall and athletic, bronzed by years of exposure to tropical suns, and there was an air of adventure and romance

about him that was altogether attractive. To David it was one of the happiest days of his life: to be near her and she friendly and at ease.

On returning to the house he offered to retire, thinking that she might be fatigued, but she asked him so sweetly to remain a little longer, that he did so. She voluntarily referred to the happy times that they had had at the farm and rose to get some photographs that had been taken since his absence. When she returned she motioned him to a seat beside her so that they could see the pictures together. There side by side they chatted of the old, happy days, and he saw the dear, sweet look that he had remembered steal back to her eyes. He could not resist letting his hand fall on hers; she did not withdraw it as he feared she might, but instead she clasped it in her own. They sat for a few moments in silence. She tried to lift her eyes to his and her lips trembled; again she tried and he saw in their depths an overwhelming love and desire. She timidly reached her hand to his shoulder and hid her face against him. He said, "What is it, Mary?" She almost whispered, "Oh Davey, you are so splendid."

To David it seemed as though the windows of heaven had opened. He said eagerly, "Mary, I have always loved you and have always believed that deep down in your heart you loved me. Please marry me and let me take care of you."

Neither spoke for a few moments. She clung tightly to the collar of his coat and yielded lovingly to his tender embrace; she said timidly, "I am so glad you have come back to me, Davey."

He tried to lift her face to his and said, "A returned lover likes a kiss of welcome. 'Can do?' "

She smiled timidly, started to lift her lips to his—then she sighed, withdrew her hands and moved her seat. "No, David, it would not be right. I am far too old for you and my health is wretched; I do not expect to live very long. I ought not to have let you go so far, but—Oh, David, I have hungered for your love so long, and have tried so desperately to repress it; I couldn't tell you finally until I had just a little taste of what our love might have been, if conditions had been different."

David went over to her chair and knelt beside her. All the light, the youth and desire had gone from her eyes; she sat there listless and pathetic. He talked fast and eagerly. She must not let herself feel that way, they were both young with the best years of life before them, if she would let him he felt sure that he could share his abounding health with her and bring her back to health and happiness. But Mary was tired and gently rose to go. There were tears in her eyes as she turned to him, saying quite simply, "I would like to kiss you, now, David." She drew him down to her own level and kissed him,

once hurriedly, and then slowly—letting her lips rest on his—and her body relaxed in his arms for a blessed moment.

The next day when David returned the servant told him that Miss Madison had gone away to be gone for a week. It seemed like a very long week, to David. During the day he was busy, but in the evenings and at night his mind went over again and again the enigma of her changeable moods and her final answer. Of one thing he was decided, he would remain faithful to her as long as she lived.

Being worried over her ill health, David went to see her physician. Dr. Whitridge was very glad to see him, saying that Mr. Madison had spoken of him frequently. After a little friendly conversation, he said that Miss Madison's condition baffled him. He said that she appeared like one who was divided against herself; sometimes she was free enough, but at other times she seemed like one in bondage to another self who was cruel to her, but from whom she could not escape. At the same time she was apparently trying to be faithful to the domineering part of her as though it was her rightful self. The doctor said that he felt sure there was some experience, in years gone by, that she was trying to suppress and hide, which was the cause of the present morbid condition of her general health.

If he could discover it, he might be able to help her.

With that the doctor began to ask David some rather pointed questions as to his relations with Miss Madison. David had become impressed with the doctor's sincerity and decided to tell him of his love for her and of his efforts to gain her consent to marriage. At first the doctor said that it was quite out of the question, at present at least. He asked David further questions about the early history of his love and repeated his earlier questions. David replied that they occasionally expressed their love for each other in affectionate ways, but never did anything that he thought was distinctly wrong. David said, "Excuse me, Doctor, but may I make a suggestion? You know of her intense religious consciousness of sin. Ever since she had that religious experience when she was twenty-three, she has bitterly condemned and tried to suppress her affectionate nature as being carnal and vile and wicked. Is not that a sufficient cause for the internal disharmony?"

The doctor replied, "I think that you may be right. Sex-desire is tremendously urgent and, if it is unable to find a natural channel, will sometimes take a terrible revenge. If recognized and turned to some spiritual or unselfish end, it can be controlled and sublimated; but if thwarted and suppressed as being wicked and sinful, it often

breaks out in disease or insanity. If this general condition is as you suggest, and on the whole I am inclined to think it is, an early marriage might be a decided help. I now think that I would advise you to urge the suit. At any rate it can do no harm, provided that you keep in mind her ill health and avoid having children. If you are successful in winning her consent, let me know; I would like to have another talk with you. May I suggest that you do not refer to this visit; if she wants us to meet she can arrange a meeting herself."

A few days later when David returned to the house, Mary was there and seemed in excellent spirits. After dinner she surprised him by saying that she had been to the farm to think things out. She laughingly added, "You may have noticed that if I am good anywhere it is there."

David could not conceal his eagerness to know the result of her thinking. He burst out, "Oh Mary, are you going to marry me?"

"David, do you realize how ill I am? It will be very hard for you—for us both, David; we can never think of—of children, David, and I shall want you so much."

Then he spoke eagerly, telling her how sincerely he loved her but how much more he honored her, and if she would consent he felt sure that his happiness would be complete in just being near her and receiving as much love, or as

little, as she cared to give. She replied, "But David, you don't seem to appreciate it. When you see how much I shall want to love you and ask of you, it may not be as easy as you think. Or for me either."

The evening was all too short for their first free exchange of love's confidences, but it was sweet beyond measure to both. Before it was over their plans were pretty well outlined; he was to arrange his laboratory work to be away for two months; there was to be a quiet wedding and they were to leave for the bungalow immediately after.

CHAPTER FIVE

A DAY or two after, Mary took David to meet the Rector and plan about the wedding. When the Madisons moved into apartments, they found themselves far away from their old church —a Baptist church of the old school—but near by was an attractive Episcopal church which they afterward attended, and whose Rector was a splendid man, with modest, thoughtful ways and a winning personality. Mary, especially, was drawn to him, and after the death of her father, she joined his Church and became a faithful communicant. To David's surprise she introduced the Rector, "My pastor, Mr. Fullerton." After the greetings, David asked him if his name was Frank. When the Rector said it was, David told him of the acquaintance with his classmate, the missionary in the Malay States. Then began an acquaintance that increased with the years and was of mutual pleasure and benefit.

They were married quietly with only three friends present, Miss Vanester, a lifelong friend of Mary, Professor Santon, who had been a member of the expedition, and Mrs. Santon. They were married early in the morning so that they could reach the farm before night. The day was a very warm one in June and traveling was ex-

tremely tiring to Mary, so that when they reached their destination she was quite used up. David's aunt urged her to stay with them for the night, where she would be perfectly quiet and at ease, while David went on to the bungalow to get things ready for her coming the next day.

The next morning brought a perfect June day. David was awake early, enjoying the freshness and quiet; it seemed wonderful after his long absence. There was much to be done and it was after nine before he reached his aunt's, but Mary had not yet appeared. It was nearly eleven before she came down, somewhat refreshed but still feeling the effects of the previous day's excitement and travel. His aunt went over to the bungalow with them and she and the servant soon had the place comfortable. They had a simple lunch together and then the aunt returned home, leaving them to themselves. Mary and David sat together most of the afternoon on the veranda, content to remain quiet in the cool shade of the great pines, enjoying the thought of each other's nearness.

David noticed that the servant in moving about was making the second bedroom as her own, and he suggested to Mary that perhaps it would be better if she occupied the cabin, leaving the bungalow to them. Mary seemed nervous and replied that they thought as she was not

very well that the servant had better be near in case of need at least for a time, and for David to occupy his cabin as of old. David was disappointed. It was so different from what he had expected and looked forward to, but he made no objection, although his face must have shown his disappointment. Mary noticed it and pressed his hand as she said, "I know it is not what you expected, dear, but let it go for to-night and tomorrow we will talk it over." David had no thought but to accept the arrangement, but there seemed to creep in between them a chill like a fog. Mary tried to talk with zest, but David had no heart to answer, and soon he thought of work to be done and left.

David tried to settle down to work but his mind was upset. He decided to take a fast walk about the pond to quiet his restlessness. The trail about the pond was over a mile and was rough in some places, but he covered it so quickly that he made it again. By this time he was quieter and in the still sympathy of the woods his soul regained its poise and his thoughts cleared. To be with Mary, to hold her hand, to see affection in her dear eyes, was joy enough for him. He could not bear her pain or enter into the secret thoughts of her inmost heart, but he could be kind to her, submit to her wishes and love her in secret when opportunity to express it

openly, failed. His heart prayed, "God bless Mary, through me."

When he returned, supper was waiting. In spite of his effort to chatter on about things that he thought would interest her, the meal was quiet and subdued. Poor Mary was the one who was now ill at ease; there was a look of pain in her eyes and once he saw tears. After supper he asked her to go with him to the ledge and watch the twilight steal over the woods. She hesitated as though even in this she dreaded some added sorrow, but then quite simply took his hand and they went slowly to the outlook. He started to talk but her mood seemed to ask for silence, so he waited. Once she placed both her hands in his, and then withdrew them. Again she leaned against him, and her eyes, dumbly pleading, sought his. "Can you still love me, David, in spite of it all?"

When he reassured her, she said, "I told you it would be hard for us both, but you wanted me and I wanted you more than you know."

He said gently, "But if we love each other why may we not be together nights as well as days?"

Her voice wavered as she almost whispered, "Oh David, David, I'd—I'd love to; but I'm—I'm afraid. If we aren't to have children, it would be carnal and wicked. The minister said so, the Bible says so; and mother told me years ago that it was sinful, even in marriage."

"Damn these parsons and old women!" exclaimed David. "Excuse me, Mary, I didn't mean to be so blunt, but how can you think such things when you see how full of love the Heavenly Father has filled the world? When birds and animals love they express it in act with no sense of evil. Why should we raise up such taboos and moral bug-a-boos. It is worrying you sick; it is ruining your happiness; it is *killing* you, Mary."

"Yes, David, it is that which is breaking my heart. I have desired you so much and for so long."

"Then let Susan take the cabin and let me be with you that we may love each other to our heart's content."

"I wish that I could think as you do. If it had not been for that revival meeting so long ago, I might have thought differently and have been happier and well."

"Let us go back then and tell Susan."

"No, please, not to-night. I can not change my thoughts of years in an hour. Tomorrow, on calmer thinking, the old thoughts may again prove convincing, and then I would be unhappy indeed."

"All right. It is your happiness that I hold most dear. I can wait, but you know how dearly I love you and want to be with you. Remember this, Mary, repression is far worse than indulgence. If you desire it, we are safer to be

happy together without fear. Some night, Mary dear, let me come."

They made their way back to the bungalow and, as they reached the steps, she placed her arms about his neck and cried softly for a moment, and then kissed him and said, "Good night, David. I am glad that we are married. Perhaps—some night."

The days flowed into weeks and a measure of routine crept into their honeymoon. Nothing more was said outwardly, they both accepted the situation. He found himself working feverishly and noted that a sense of resentment and injustice would creep into his half-conscious thinking, which he would repress as soon as he noticed it. Mary, on the other hand, seemed quite content to let things drift as they were. She had her ups and downs but was not so reserved as of old. There would be days when she would show signs of pain and sleeplessness; then there would be a day of sunshine and winning ways and affection. Once or twice it seemed as though she was leading to some new intimacy, then she would veer off and the look of strain would come back.

The summer was drawing to its close and they had begun to think of returning to the city. Her days of pain and weakness had rather increased of late. Then came several days of steady pain and her whole demeanor changed.

She became very submissive, very affectionate and sweet. Her eyes had a hint of pain, but they were more luminous and soft. He caught her once looking at him with a wonderfully beautiful smile about the eyes. She suggested one evening that they go to the ledge to see the moonlight on the water. She tried at first to walk briskly, but soon went more slowly and before they reached the top he almost had to carry her. She seemed to like being carried and nestled into his arms and patted his hand. The evening was very calm and beautiful, there was a charm of woodland fragrance in the air and the moonbeams rested tenderly on the water. They were quiet for a long time and then Mary said, "Davey, I can almost feel your mother's presence mingling with the spirit of the trees. Tell me about her; do you know where she was when you first began to be?"

Then he told her how his parents had become acquainted and of their first winter in the woods, as he had heard it from his aunt. She placed her hands on his cheeks and drew him down to kiss him; he kissed her again and again on lips and ear and neck, to her evident delight; they were quiet again, then she drew his hand in gentle touch over her bosom and laughed softly as he accepted the hint and fondled her tenderly. He was filled with unspeakable delight as she gave herself up unrestrainedly to his caresses. She

placed her arms about his neck as if to whisper something and ended with ardent kisses; then with adorable shyness she hid her face on his shoulder and whispered, "Davey, beloved, would you like to be with me? I want you so much—to-night."

"But dear, you are not very strong to-day, is it wise?"

"I've thought of that, David. I know that I am weak, weaker than ever. Three nights ago it came over me that I could not live very much longer and I want to be with you all I can. I have thought of it every day since to see if the old thoughts would come back, but they have gone for good. I have been unspeakably happy in anticipation, you must have seen it in my eyes, beloved."

When they returned to the house they found that Susan had retired for the night, so like two happy children they went to David's cabin. The night which had been so still when they were on the ledge, was now all aquiver with tiny voices and subdued melody. The trees were whispering together and softly laughing, the wavelets on the shore were lapping gently in rhythmic music, the stars were twinkling in understanding sympathy. They lay in each other's arms, saying very little, enjoying each other's nearness and warmth of body, enraptured by mingled kisses and the soft touch

of caressing hands. . . . Sleep came softly to them. Once he awakened, thinking she had called his name, but when he kissed her softly she still slept on. Then the awaking, still together, glad and content. How fresh and beautiful the morning seemed, so green, and young, and new.

They were up betimes. Mary seemed to have renewed vitality and entered into the work with unaccustomed zeal. After supper she suggested a walk and they went a little way, but she changed her mind and decided to rest where they were, as she wanted to tell him something.

"When I woke this morning, David, I was aware that I had dreamed the old familiar dream and this time it was the clearest ever. There were crowds and crowds of girls and I was all dressed up like a Queen of May. Boys had been invited and it was to be part of the game for the boys to search for the Queen, the one who found her was to be crowned Prince. We were all delightfully excited as the time for the coming of the boys drew near. My girl friends kept running to where I was concealed to tell me the news. I thought of you, Davey, and I wished so hard that it might be you who should find me. I planned to hide until you appeared and I became so excited I could hardly control myself. Then the word came that the boys were coming, a whole army of them. There was a kind of

rhythmic rush, like the breakers on the shore, now advancing—now receding—again advancing with a rush. Every one was beside themselves with joy. Then the rush came, a great tidal wave swept in and on its crest were thousands and thousands of beautiful, slender boys, swimming and splashing about as they came up the shore, all trying to find me, the Queen of May. All the other girls were on the shore and venturing into the tide trying to capture each her own. Oh, what delirious excitement! Every one was shouting and laughing as the boys were captured one by one by the laughing girls. Still the stronger, the better ones, kept racing about, searching, searching everywhere for me. But I —I wanted you, you, *you;* and I was afraid that you wouldn't find me, that you would be too late. At last I ventured to look out from my hiding place and there you were leading all the rest. I just sprang toward you and called with all my might, 'Davey, Davey, here I am, come quick!' You heard me and in a minute we were clasped in each other's arms. We were perfectly happy, oh, so happy! Then we saw the vague, distant 'form' all about us, and we watched it in awe-struck wonder. It was the same I had seen in other dreams. It was not at all outside or apart from us; it was ourselves, and at the same time it enveloped us and was so vast and wonderful that we could not distinguish it at all. I

thought of fragrance, of health, of light. You were just saying we must search and search, when I woke up to find myself fairly clutching your sleeve and happier than I had ever been in my life. What can the dream mean?"

After she finished speaking they sat in silence as the twilight deepened. David was profoundly moved by her words; the dream seemed to have some deep significance, some message for them if he could properly interpret it. It had been a perfect day, indeed! But with the growing dusk, David became conscious that, with the completion of her story, Mary's strength had been exhausted. She seemed to sink into his arms almost lifeless; it was not a faint, it was just extreme fatigue. Her task was done, she had collapsed.

He carried her in his arms and placed her on the bed; Susan undressed her and she fell into a troubled sleep. David sat by her bed all night, but, as the next day she seemed so much better, they decided not to call the local doctor, but to get ready to return to the city at once. It was another day before they reached her apartment, and glad enough were they to be there, for, although she had been able to be up and to travel, she was very weak and endured constant dull pain. When Dr. Whitridge came he at first talked with her cheerfully, but gradually became more concerned and decided that she had better go to his private hospital where she would be under

constant observation and receive instant attention in case of need. The next day he had a specialist to see her and the dread word, cancer, was spoken. At first they thought of an immediate operation, but decided to postpone it for a few days to give her time to gain strength. The next day she was much weaker and was suffering great pain. When David came to see her she wanted to hold his hand but could say nothing; her face was wan and strained against the white pillow. She tried to speak and said brokenly, "I am so glad, David." There was a long silence; then she said, "The dream. It was ourselves in —other mansions of life. The delay and denial—was not our loss alone—these dream children—had longed and suffered and waited—for us. I think we are—their form." Then her mind wandered, to the early days at the farm, the pines, the moonlight, the bathing, their secret. A happy, peaceful look suffused her eyes. Suddenly she started and tried to spring up, "The *Form!* David, I see the Form! It's the Lord!"

The nurse came in, placed her finger warningly on her lips and went to call the doctor. Mary lingered on for another day in a comatose condition, and passed away with all the strained lines of pain and worry smoothed away by the recollection of her happy childhood and the happier vision of her Lord.

CHAPTER SIX

After Mary's funeral, David was called to the office of her attorney and was informed as to the disposition of her estate. After some special bequests, she had left everything to him and he found himself possessed of abundant means. He was handed a letter from Mary in which she expressed her pleasure in leaving the estate to him and saying that her father had suggested it. She hoped that it would enable him to continue the search of his boyhood dreams; for an understanding of life's meaning and purpose. David resumed the work of classifying the specimens that the expedition had brought back, and, at the same time, completed the required work at the University for a Doctor's degree.

Another expedition being organized to continue the research work in the tropics, David was asked to join it as entomologist, and for another two years he was away on field investigations. Before going, he gave up the city apartment and removed the things of value to the farm. After talking with his uncle, who had begun to feel the effects of old age, they decided to curtail the farm work as much as possible while he was away. David spent only a day and night at his cabin in the woods and with a sad heart closed

the doors for his long absence. But many a night in the sultry heat of the tropic jungle his mind wandered in reverie over the happy memories that clustered over the Pond Woods.

Toward the end of the two-year stay in the tropics, David contracted an eye infection that was very painful to bear and that rendered him practically blind. There were some thoughts of sending him home but, as the expedition was to return so soon, it was decided that he should remain and return with them. He was always glad that he did so, for in those helpless days and weeks he came into deeper acquaintance with his comrades and the enforced solitude made it easier to devote more time to thought and meditation, to the enrichment of his life. It was while staying at a missionary hospital for a time, that he had opportunity to renew acquaintance with his former missionary friend, and they spent many happy hours in intimate conversation.

When he arrived in New York, the Rector and Dr. Whitridge were at the dock to welcome him. He was taken to a hospital at once and made comfortable; his trouble was studied and a course of treatment decided upon. He wanted very much to be back at the Pond Woods, if some one could be found to care for him. His aunt had invited him to stay with them as soon as he could travel, so it was decided that if a suitable nurse could be found, he was to accept

her invitation. The Doctor brought two or three nurses for him to consider, but none of them seemed to satisfy. One day, when the Rector was calling, David unconsciously revealed his impatience with the nurses the doctor had suggested, and asked him if he could suggest anyone. The Rector thought it would be difficult to find one who would be perfectly satisfactory. David again asked him if he had any one in mind. After a little hesitation, the Rector answered that there was a young married woman belonging to the Girls Friendly Society that he thought might do; there was one difficulty, however, she had a small child that she would insist on taking with her. David replied, impatiently, that he did not want a child about. Without minding the interruption, the Rector added that he would bring her around the next day. "She is young," he said, "about twenty-two, attractive in appearance, and has had some experience as an untrained nurse. She and her room-mate are very reticent about their affairs, but she evidently needs work."

The next day the Rector brought her and left her with David. He was blind, so he could not see her. At first he tried to talk with her about herself, but she replied very briefly and seemed relieved when he turned to other subjects. He learned that she was an American, had been brought up on a farm in the north part of the

State, had been in the city for four years, and had worked in offices and stores and as lady's maid. She talked more freely about her little boy, now two years of age, and revealed in every word her love for him and her own affectionate heart. He asked her to read to him, and the first strong impression he received of her was of her quiet musical voice. She read slowly, with a pleasant voice and with intelligence; it rested him to listen to her. He found himself losing the critical spirit he had had with the other applicants, and it was with interest that he asked her to rebandage his eyes. She did it deftly and, when she gave it a little pat at the finish, he had decided to employ her. He asked her name; she replied simply, "My name is Annie."

He replied, without thinking, "My name is David, David Lisle. When will you be free to take me home, Annie?"

"I can come Monday morning," she replied; and then he heard her put on her things and go quietly away. After she had gone, he thought of a rabbit, something soft and furry and dear. He felt rested and thought that his eyes were much better. His mind wandered away to his beloved woods, that he had not seen for years and now was to see again very soon. He wondered if his mother's spirit would seem as near there, as before; he thought of Mary and the long years of losing and finding and loss again. And then

without a jar he found himself thinking of Annie. He had loved to be in the Pond Woods alone, to breathe in the soft hum of its many voices, to rest quietly on the border land of another world. But now he found himself a little excited, he was glad that he was not to be alone; he smiled to himself, and then thought he heard the doleful sound of the wind in the tree tops, very far away.

The journey to the farm was made easily; Annie attended to his needs, and then sat quietly amusing little Dick. His uncle was at the station to meet them and they were driven at once to the farm house where they were to stay.

His eyes steadily improved and within a month he found that he could safely remove the bandage during the early morning and late afternoon hours. How well he remembered the first sight of Annie. She was as interested in the removal of the bandage as he, but was unconscious that she was in the picture, until he exclaimed, "Why Annie, how pretty you are." She stood before him with little Dick holding to her skirt; she was below average height, of rounded form, with an oval, dimpled face and wavy chestnut hair. It had been months since David had seen a white woman's face, and now to see one so pretty affected him deeply. When she noticed that he was looking at her, she sprang quickly behind him and covered his eyes with her soft hands, and her bubbling laugh rippled

out, "Oh Mr. Lisle, you must be careful and not tax your eyes that way; look at the grass, or at the woods, or at little Dick, isn't he dear?"

By using dark glasses he was soon able to use his eyes more and more, but for a long time he avoided reading, partly to save his eyes and partly because he enjoyed Annie's reading. With the strengthening of his sight there came an overpowering desire to go to the Pond Woods to live. One day when they were there Annie suggested that they move over. She said that if he occupied his cabin, she and Dick could have the bungalow and, while she wasn't a very expert cook, she knew enough about cooking to get him simple meals; if they wanted more they could go to the farm house for dinners. David was more than ready to try the experiment, and they were soon settled.

Their days soon fell into a routine of reading, exercise and meals. They especially enjoyed the evenings together, watching the sunsets, or simply absorbed in the evening stillness, followed by a little more reading before bed time. Annie was not especially active, but was sympathetic and naturally very affectionate. Often of an evening she would rest near David, playing with Dick or holding him. Sometimes she would let her hand rest on David's knee, and, when she noticed that it pleased him, she would let it rest softly and quietly in his. Once or twice, at the

close of an especially beautiful day, she had leaned lightly against him and seemed pleased to have his arm about her. At times David was tempted to draw her to him but his good sense and memory checked him. All summer they preserved this affectionate and kindly attitude of brother and sister.

One night in late summer they had been speaking of how fast the summer was passing, and Annie's words of regret that their happy association would soon be over affected David beyond measure. Usually they returned to the bungalow when Dick became sleepy, but that evening David said to her, "Let me put Dick to bed and you stay up here until I return, will you?"

When he returned she was where he had left her, and her eyes were looking dreamily off across the pond. He could not restrain his desire for her. He seated himself close to her and placed his arm about her; she took his hand in both of hers, but neither spoke. At last he said, "Annie, let me hold you, will you?"

"Oh, Mr. Lisle, do you think it would be right? What will you think of me?"

"Please, Annie dear?"

Very quietly she slipped into his arms, with one arm about his neck and her head resting against his. They sat thus for a long time, saying nothing; then David, happening to look at her,

saw her eyes fixed on his and smiling. Neither intended to do so, but before they were aware, their lips had met in an ardent kiss. For an hour they remained together becoming more fervid and impassioned with every passing moment. David was beside himself. He said, "Annie, dear, may I stay with you to-night."

She hesitated a minute, but without drawing away; "Oh Mr. Lisle, I am surprised at you! Do you think it would be right?"

With that David's self-control came back. He said, "You are right, Annie. This mustn't go on; it will be too much for us. To-morrow we will have a serious talk, now good night." And he left her abruptly.

It was along toward one o'clock that night that David heard a knock at his cabin door and a voice calling his name. He asked who it was. Annie answered in a frightened voice, saying that little Dick was sick, and asked him to come to the bungalow and see if he needed a doctor. Without waiting to dress he hurried over; much to his surprise little Dick was sleeping quietly and seemed the picture of health. David turned to Annie; she was standing just back of him in her night dress, her hands twisting it nervously, her eyes, large and excited, looking at him rather than at Dick. "What is it, Annie? Dick isn't sick, is he?"

She replied in a faint voice, "He was restless,

and I was excited so that I couldn't go to sleep, and I got worried." Then she came close to David, putting her arms about his neck and resting her head. "Oh, Mr. Lisle, I wondered what I would do if he was really sick. I didn't want to stay alone. I kept thinking of you—of your wish last evening, and—and—I tried not to, honestly, but I did want you to come and stay with me, and then—then I thought that Dick might be sick and I didn't know it; and—and—I couldn't keep my feet from going to you. I thought if you could only be here for a minute or two, it would satisfy me. Don't be angry, I want to stay near you so much."

David realized how excited she was; she who was usually so quiet and submissive. As he looked down at her he saw the glisten of a tear; she was after all only a grown-up child, a dear, impulsive, affectionate child. His heart went out to her, not as during the evening in passionate abandon, but now in a purer love that was patient and kind. He said, "Annie, I did wrong last evening to ask what I did. I didn't realize what an unkindness it was to you; but now we must not add wrong to wrong. I must return to my cabin and you must quiet down as soon as you can."

"Oh Mr. Lisle, please don't leave me alone tonight. I am so excited; I can't control myself."

"I will stay here on the couch, if you wish it, but you must go back to bed."

"Please let me stay with you for just a little while."

"All right, child, come and sit in my lap for a few minutes if you wish to, but then you must go back to bed."

She nestled close to him with her hands holding his arm, and they were quiet for a time. Once he heard a sigh of contentment. A little later he felt her hand reaching up and stroking his cheek then she pulled herself up and kissed him, nor did she take her lips away but let them brush his lips, light as a feather. Still she said nothing. A wonderful tenderness filled David's heart; he thought, "you poor, tired, adorable child." The minutes passed, David's thoughts racing between that newly awakened, protective purpose and an instinctive desire that kept hinting, suggesting, excusing. She whispered, "Honey, let me stay with you, may I?"

But Love saved him from passion. "No, dear, we must not. Tomorrow we will have our talk and decide what is right; to-night we must remember the Rector and keep faith with him. Now, go to your room. Yes, if you really want me to, I will stay here on the couch. Now good night," and he closed the door.

When David awoke the next morning he rose very quietly and left the bungalow. He had a

plunge in the pond, dressed and went to work in the garden. When Annie called him to breakfast he was surprised to see traces of tears, she was evidently feeling very badly. When he inquired as to the cause, she burst out, "I am so bad and wicked, you can't want me to stay here any more."

"No, Annie dear, you mustn't talk or feel that way. You are only a child and are very much upset. We must talk it over and you must let me plan for you. The first thing is to have some hot coffee and after that we are going to have our talk. Come, that's a good girl, let's hurry."

She brightened up somewhat, but the tears welling up in her eyes told how miserable she felt. It was only little by little that she recovered command of herself. "Now, Annie, I want you to tell me all about it; why do you feel so badly?"

Just then little Dick woke up and in caring for him Annie forgot her depression and became more cheerful; she started to work again, but David stopped her and again asked her why she felt as she did. At once she relapsed into her former weary, hopeless attitude. She said, "Yes, I know, Mr. Lisle, you don't want me any more and I am to go back to New York."

"Annie, tell me, is there anything else besides last night?"

"I was so discouraged. Everything goes against me. At home, and in New York and everywhere.

This was the first place I was ever really happy in my life, and I thought this was ended. You spoke of having a serious talk with me to-day, and last night you acted as if you were angry. You don't know how much I wanted to stay near you last night, and you were displeased. This morning when I awoke, you were gone; and all the old fears came back, and I don't want to go back to New York."

David asked her to tell him about her marriage. She replied, "It is a sorry story. I am ashamed to tell you." But David urged her, saying that he had a particular reason for asking.

She told him that at the time America went into the war, there were many soldiers coming and going and she got acquainted with one. He found out where she worked and would call for her whenever he had leave, and take her to a dance or to the movies. She said he had a bold, taking way and she felt that she had to do what ever he said, and when she did he was nice and generous. One day when he came she saw that he was greatly excited. He had heard a rumor, he said, that they were to be embarked very soon; he took her to the lobby of a big hotel on Broadway and asked her to marry him the next day, so that when he went they would belong to each other. Annie consented and they spent a very happy evening together; but when she spoke of returning to her room, he flushed and

said that as he was to go away so soon he had already registered her as his wife and urged her to stay with him. She hesitated, but his impetuous, compelling way won. As Annie told David this, she broke down and implored him not to blame her too much, because she thought that he loved her and that she could trust him. The next morning Annie returned to her room while he went for the license. He promised to be back by ten, but he never returned. She returned to her room and she and her roommate, Ailene, tried to trace him, but at headquarters they replied that there was no such name on the list that sailed that day; they have never heard of him since. As a matter of protection she used the name of Mrs.

But her real troubles came when it became evident that she was to have a baby. She lost one position after another. As she recalled these experiences the tears fell and she could hardly go on. During those weary months, Ailene never failed her. Ailene worked overtime to increase her earnings, but in spite of all she had to draw on her savings; but there was never a word of complaint, she was like a mother to Annie. As Annie began to blame herself for being so wicked, David checked her and tried to show her that she was not to blame so much as it was the circumstances that pressed so heavily upon her. David said, "Come, Annie, come over on

the couch and we will talk a little before we go to work."

A surprised look came into Annie's eyes as she stammered, "Why—what do you mean, Mr. Lisle?"

David replied, "Why, don't you understand? You aren't married, and we can be engaged and love each other all we want. Let the dishes wait while we talk it over."

Poor Annie, confused and tired from the rapidly shifting excitement and discouragement, was unable at first to comprehend what it was all about. But when she saw Dick in David's arms and both of them smiling, a look of almost incredulous wonder came into her eyes that made the left-over tears shine like diamonds. She said, "Oh, Mr. Lisle, you have been kind and considerate to me, and I couldn't help liking you, but this—no, I must be dreaming. You can't mean to marry a wicked, unmarried girl with an illegit—"

"There, there, Annie, you are never going to say those horrid words. You were born with a very tender, loving heart that has led you into much trouble; but you aren't wicked and now I am going to repay you with my love and care. And Dick is a soldier's boy and is going to grow up a fine man. There, don't cry, dear."

At last Annie was convinced. She turned to David, pretty and lovable, shy and sweet, with

tears still shining in her eyes, and whispered, "Davey, my lover, how happy you have made me. Now I can love you all I want to, and I want to love you—heaps."

During the day they did the necessary work and were as happy as children. At four they took their lunch up on the ledge and played with Dick, and talked. How they did talk! There were silly things to be said, and inquisitive questions to be asked, desires to be revealed and plans made.

There was one subject that they discussed that was destined to play so important a part in their future that it must be referred to more in detail. Annie had been telling him about her roommate, Ailene, and of her self-sacrificing kindness. She asked David if it was true that he was very rich? David laughingly disclaimed it, but admitted that he had enough for their needs if they lived simply. Annie nestled her cheek against his and said, "Oh Davey, won't you give me an allowance, so that I can save out of it to repay Ailene for all she has done for me when I was sick and out of work?

"Yes, Annie, you shall have your allowance, but for these larger things you must let me pay. How much do you think we owe her?"

"I don't know how much, but it was an awful lot, hundreds of dollars. Can you spare as much as that?"

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David assured her and said that he would be very glad indeed to show his appreciation for what Ailene had done for her. Then he suggested that Annie invite Ailene to come and visit them, particularly as they ought not to be there alone now that they were engaged. Then David asked her if there was anything more that she wanted, and she replied that she would be very glad if a search could be made for her brother Richard. She had not heard from him for a number of years and loved him very much; she would give almost anything to see him again.

As the twilight deepened she crept closer into David's arms and except for little expressions of endearment, they rested quietly. When little Dick showed sleepy signs, they returned to the house and watched him fall asleep. David said, "Isn't he a little dear?" Annie gave him a hug and said, "I am so glad that you love him." Then, as she glanced at him shyly, she said, "Wouldn't it be nice if he had a little sister. I wonder if they would love each other as much as brother Richard and I did?" After a little she added, "I am so glad that it is not last night. Last night I was awfully excited; to-night I am happy, so happy."

Outside the wind in the tree tops gave forth a weird, mournful note that made one shiver, it sounded so dreary and foreboding. David came to himself feeling Annie's soft, sensitive hands

stroking his hair, and saying to him, "Wake up, Davey. The idea of you going to sleep with me in your arms on the very first night of our engagement. Aren't you ashamed?"

They lingered on happy and content, Annie doing most of the talking. Finally she noticed David's silence and said, "I really believe you *are* sleepy. Don't you want to sleep on the couch to-night? I like to think of you very near. Please do."

"No, Annie, I must go to my own cabin. Good night."

But still he moved not. Her love seemed so sweet, he could not bear to go. She said, "Davey, let me undress and you hold me a little as you did last night."

"I am afraid we ought not, dear, I had better go now."

"Well, let me take off my shoes and stockings anyway; you help me."

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

In spite of the wind in the tree tops the night before, they awoke in each other's arms to a fresh and beautiful day. Annie said, "You have made me deliriously happy, Davey, but just as soon as you can let me go, I must get busy. There are oceans of things to do; I must plan some sewing, there's breakfast to get,—no, I can't endure breakfast until I write Ailene; I know, I will telegraph her before I do any thing else."

In due time the reply was telephoned over, "Will take the night train. Ailene."

CHAPTER SEVEN

The next day, when Ailene arrived at the station, David saw a rather tall, self-possessed lady of thirty with level, clear eyes, good forehead, abundant hair, and a strong, dependable chin. There was about her the appearance of dignity and command that so often marks an experienced teacher. His first impression was one of confidence and trust; it was not until afterwards that he noticed what a fine looking woman she was. Annie threw herself into her arms as though she had not seen her for years; even little Dick stretched out his hands to her. It was evident that Ailene was pleased, also, although she better kept her poise. As Annie said nothing about David, Ailene turned to him with a calm and friendly look. He said, laughingly, "I am Mr. Lisle, Annie's employer." That brought Annie to attention. "Oh, Ailene, I left his employ yesterday. He is my husband that is to be." As she took possession of his arm, an adorable look came to her face, and she added, "Oh, Ailene, he is such a dear."

On the way back, Ailene took little Dick and for the most part ignored the others, but when she did speak, her words were simple and straightforward. It was evident that there was

perfect confidence between the girls, but it was more the relation of a mother and a daughter. Within an hour Ailene was busy preparing dinner and in a quiet, systematic way had taken charge of affairs. Annie just as naturally sat back and talked as fast as she could, telling Ailene in a mixed-up fashion everything that had happened since she left the city. David left them to themselves and when he returned later they did not hear him coming; he caught sight of Ailene sitting in the big chair, with Annie in her lap crying as if her heart would break. Ailene motioned him to go away, and when he came back again, Ailene was setting the table and Annie greeted him with her usual happy laugh.

In the afternoon they had their supper up on the ledge. David brought the conversation round to Ailene's unselfish love and care of Annie, and, after expressing appreciation for it, asked how much money cost it had been to her. Ailene replied that every cent it had cost was willingly given, and if Annie was never able to repay her it would be no matter. David asked her again to tell him how much it had cost. She replied that she had six hundred dollars in the bank and now there was only two hundred and seventy dollars. David asked if she thought that was all it had cost her. She replied that it was more than she ever expected to receive. David reminded her that it was three years since she had

begun to care for Annie and remarked that the interest would be considerable. Then he asked her how much she had been able to save before Annie came to her. She replied that she tried to save at least a hundred dollars a year. David said that would be three hundred more; then he added, "I have written an order on the Fifth Avenue Bank, you can get it when you return to the city."

She read it aloud, "Deliver to Miss Ailene Carter one thousand dollar Liberty Bond, and charge the same to the account of David Lisle." She looked dazed at first and then broke into tears; it was the first time, Annie said, that she had ever seen Ailene cry. Ailene said, "I can not take it, it is too much. I was very lonely in New York and Annie came to me with her sunny, affectionate ways and filled the rooms with sunshine. I never begrudged a penny of the cost, because it was for her. Take it back, Mr. Lisle, and give me four hundred dollars; I will be perfectly satisfied."

"Oh, Ailene Mavourneen," said Annie, "you must take it. David never told me how much he was going to give you, and I am as surprised as you. It is fine of you, Davey; I will pay you back a thousand times in love and kisses and hugs. Oh, you are so splendid."

"Yes, Ailene, you must keep it, and it is only the beginning of payment for your kindness to

the one I love. We shall be on the outlook for other ways; we want you to feel that our home is your home. Ailene, do you mind calling me David, after this?"

"Thank you, Mr. Lisle, David. You have made me very happy and the welcome to your home with Annie and Dick is more to me than money."

David spoke of Annie's wish to find her brother, Richard. Ailene suggested a number of clues to follow, and said that if he would go West and make the attempt, she would arrange to stay with Annie. After supper they watched the sunset; David went for his violin and they had music as the shadows fell about them.

Ailene wrote to New York for an extension of her vacation and David started at once on the search for Richard. He first went to Annie's home and met her father, a hard, unsympathetic man, not at all interested in either Annie or Richard. He then called on some of the neighbors and received from a former friend of Richard an address in Detroit. He followed this clue and found that Richard had gone from there to Saginaw. He had been drafted from there and after his return from camp had gone back to Detroit. David went to the address in Detroit that had been given him, and learned that Richard had gone to Denver six months before. He telegraphed the Denver address and received

in reply an address in Pueblo. He telegraphed there and received a reply from Richard at last; he had been sick and was out of work, if money was sent him he would be glad to go back East. Money was sent and in due time Richard appeared at the hotel agreed upon in Detroit.

Poor Richard! Hard work, insufficient food, and sickness, had nearly finished him. He was small and thin and pale; his face resembled Annie's but was less pleasing, the chin especially was weak and, in general, there was an air of defeat about him that was pathetic. David purchased a suit of clothes for him, and after a bath, a shave and some hot food, he appeared like a new man. They took a night train home and within ten days from leaving home they were back again at the Pond Woods. Richard seemed ashamed of his story and told it only in parts as he was questioned. It was a continual repetition of work, out of work, travel; work, out of work, travel. He had done almost anything that a casual worker could do, but his lack of education, weakness, and timidity always brought him defeat.

At first he slept on the couch in the bungalow, but Ailene got him interested in building a shack of his own. She encouraged him to take a regular plunge in the pond, to work about the camp and to read all his spare time. Ailene had inherited a love for farming and, having ex-

pressed a liking for farm work, she sought to interest him in the work of the big farm. It took but a few days for Richard to discover a respect for Ailene, and he soon got into the habit of looking to her for orders, and for encouragement, too. It was good to see how affectionate he and Annie were. He was older by four years, and naturally took a position of superiority to her. He loved to hold her hand and always kissed her good night. Annie asked Richard one day if in his wanderings he had ever found a girl that he wanted to marry. He replied that there was one up in Saginaw that he liked pretty well, and if he had had steady work he would have asked her to marry him; but when she showed affection for him, an uncontrollable timidity came over him; when the thought that she was trying to get him came to him, his love changed to dislike and he threw up his job and went away. Annie said, "Why, Richard, what you needed more than anything else was the love of a good girl like her; it would have steadied you and been the making of you."

One day Ailene suggested that David take Annie to Pittsfield with him. Annie became excited and could hardly wait for the time to start, and once there, they were hardly off the train before she began to tease him for a nut-sundae; then she wanted to go into different stores and price things, something that David

abominated. They went to the hotel for lunch and David was disturbed to notice that she seemed pleased to have other men notice her. After lunch they went to the movies. David had never cared very much for them, but Annie laughed and cried as the commonplace melodrama unfolded. He was glad when the day was over. At supper she described the trivial happenings of the day as though they were most important. Once David caught Ailene's eye, but neither smiled.

There was another incident that troubled David. He had always looked upon his cabin as a place of refuge where he could be alone, but of late Annie appeared to be making it hers, also. One evening David wanted her to read to him but, as Ailene was reading, Annie suggested they go to the cabin. She soon tired of the reading and asked him to talk to her, so she sat in his lap and they chatted away for some time, then she became more demonstrative and began to pet and tease him. In the scuffle that followed they fell on the couch, when who should appear at the door but Ailene. Annie did not appear to mind it but David was embarrassed and attempted to explain. Ailene ignored it and said, "It was getting late and I thought I would come over and walk back with Annie. I didn't mean to surprise you." The next morning David sought the first opportunity to speak with

Ailene alone. He told her of the play that had led up to their being on the couch, and insisted that it was wholly unintentional. "I think I understand, David. I know Annie pretty well; she is easily excited and at such times forgets to think and has no idea of restraint. You will have to think for her."

One day Ailene asked David if he would take her for a walk over the farm, and it was a revelation to him to note her good sense and the range of her farming knowledge. She pointed out that the farm was running down very fast, and asked him why he did not operate it more energetically. David explained that his uncle was getting old and, as the farm had never paid, he had done as little as he could, and added that he had some thought of selling it. She told him of Richard's interest in farming and suggested that he let Richard stay with uncle during the winter and see what farmer stuff there was in him. Then she asked David to sit down and let her get something else off her mind.

She said that she wanted to speak about Annie. "You love her very much now, and she is lovable, but you will find that by nature she is timid and easily discouraged, just like her brother. Unless you recognize these limitations, the years will be very few before you grow away from her. Every year you are growing more intellectual, she, just as naturally, will sink into

a kitchen drudge or a nurse girl for her babies, whose only interest will be the movies, unless you plan for her and insist on her keeping up with you."

David asked her what she would advise him to do. She replied promptly, "When you go to the city for the winter, get an apartment large enough so that she can have a maid to do the kitchen work and help care for Dick; then encourage her to be with you all she can. Let her continue to read to you, get her books to read by herself; insist on her attending lectures and going to church, otherwise she will get dispirited and will inevitably slip backward. It will mean loving, thoughtful patience on your part, but you must do it if you want her to keep up with you and your love continue."

David thanked her and asked her to advise him about the marriage. Ailene was thoughtful for a moment and then replied, "I wanted to speak about that also. I know how eager Annie is and you must be also, but in spite of possible misunderstandings, I want to advise against an early marriage. You have known her only a short time and are acquainted with only one side of her; seeing her under other conditions might make a difference. There is a good deal of sewing that she ought to do and you ought to fit up a home for her before you marry. Why

not delay it until you are well settled in the city for the winter?"

David thanked her again and explained that Annie kept referring to it, but now he saw his way more clearly. They were silent for a few minutes and then David continued, "I am very glad you came when you did, Ailene. I was grateful for what you had done for Annie, but now I am grateful for the measure of help you have been to me. The experiences that I have been through the past six months, my blindness and return home, my love for Annie, have disturbed my emotional balance; you have helped me to find it again; I thank you for it. Will you come and stay with us next summer? We would love to have you."

"Yes, David, I would like to come. I love it up here and I want to be near Annie and Richard. They need me more than they appreciate. Let us return now."

David followed the suggestion of Ailene and arranged for Richard to live and work at the farm. Richard appeared to like the arrangement. At first uncle and aunt liked his pleasant ways and willingness to do what was asked of him, but after he had been there for a week, uncle said of him that he seemed to have two different sides: one was submissive and agreeable, the other side, which only revealed itself when he was crossed, was boastful and willful. Uncle

noticed it first when Richard was with horses; usually he would treat them kindly, but this time, when they did not back to suit him, he beat them cruelly. Uncle told him he must never do it again, and he sulked for some time. Annie adored him and with her he was usually nice and affectionate, although inclined to domineer. She did not appear to notice or mind it, and was childishly happy to do whatever he said. They liked to be alone together and occasionally would be gone for some time. There was a village boy who worked at the farm sometimes with whom Annie had become acquainted; Richard took a fancy to him and they were together a good deal. He was a rather rough, uneducated young man, with none too good a reputation. Through him Richard and Annie became acquainted with other of the village young people and they would often meet of an evening at the pond for boating and gaiety. With David, Richard was respectful, but he kept away from him as much as he could. With Aileen, he was different. He sought her company, asked her advice, and appeared to find satisfaction in leaning on her greater strength and better judgment. In a way he seemed to fear her. In speaking about him later, Ailene said that, in spite of his weak and changeable nature, she liked him somewhat as a mother likes a wayward son.

It was about a week after Ailene's talk with David that she found herself alone with Richard. He asked her to go with him to the farm to advise him. They wandered about for a time and she noticed that he seemed ill at ease, so she asked him what he had on his mind. He told her that uncle was old and notional and he did not think they could get along together. Ailene tried to encourage him by telling of her talk with David in regard to the future of the farm and of the possibility of his having more authority the next year provided he did well this. He responded to this and became optimistic and boastful. Then to her surprise he changed the conversation and began to speak of his admiration for her and of how much he could do if she would help him. She asked him what he meant. He replied, a little hesitantly, that he wished she would marry him. As usual she replied frankly and directly, "Richard, I love your sister and you are a good deal like her, but I am older than you and I do not think you appreciate what you are saying."

As the days went by, Richard said nothing more about his proposal and Ailene noticed that he was not paying her so much attention as formerly. One evening Richard and Annie had been out with some of the village young people, and when Annie returned it was alone with this farm boy, and very late. When she had an opportunity Ailene spoke with Richard about it

and told him plainly that she did not like the way Annie went off with him and these village boys. Richard was disconcerted by this and said that Annie had told him that she liked to be with him all she could because it was awfully stupid here until he came. He added, "I am going away very soon anyway; the winters are too cold up here. I have written a chum of mine at Detroit and when I hear from him, I'm off."

Ailene spoke to David about it, but he made light of it, saying that it was natural for them to want to be together and he had every confidence in Annie. Nevertheless, Ailene's words troubled him; he had noticed himself a change in Annie's manner since Richard had come. She continued affectionate, indeed at times she seemed to be beside herself with love for him. Once or twice, soon after Ailene had come, she had persuaded him to go off alone with her, but of late he had been very careful not to do so. Except at these special times, Annie seemed to avoid him somewhat. He noticed, also, that Annie was increasingly inclined to let Ailene do most of the work, even to the care of little Dick. Once he overheard her saying to Richard, "Oh, it's so stupid here; I'll go crazy if something doesn't happen before long." This was a disheartening surprise to David, because he thought that she loved the country as much as he did. The thought flashed into his mind, "Will I have

to give up the country for her sake?" He recalled that he was making almost no progress in the reading that he had planned for the summer, and, in a measure, he had lost interest in it. The mystical delight that he had formerly enjoyed when alone in the woods at night, now seemed alien and a thing of the past.

They had already begun to plan for their return to the city, when one afternoon Annie teased David to take a long walk in the woods with her. This was something unusual for her and David was particularly busy at the time, but she urged it so sweetly that he went with her. When they came to a secluded place in the deep woods she suggested that they rest for a while. She nestled in his arms and they caressed each other happily for a time. She became increasingly ardent and told him how much she wanted his love, and asked if they couldn't be married very soon. She said, "Don't you ever want me, Davey? You did at the beginning." He kissed her and assured her of his love, but she was not satisfied and whispered, "Davey, we are all alone here."

He replied, "No, Annie, it wouldn't be wise or right; let us be patient and happy just as we are."

Annie appeared to lose her zest and complained, "You aren't near so loving as you were

before Ailene came; I hate to have her always about."

This added to David's perplexity; it disheartened him to find her ungrateful and petulant, but he tried to reassure her. He suggested that they continue their walk, but she replied fretfully that she didn't want to go any farther if he was going to be cross. "Annie, I didn't mean to be cross, aren't you unjust?"

She replied, with irritation, "Yes, blame me, I am always the one in the wrong." David felt helpless to reply and they turned toward the camp in silence.

As they drew near the camp, they met Richard coming toward them. He asked David if he would let Annie go with him as he had something to tell her. David, somewhat relieved, turned away, but as he went about his work he could not get Annie off his mind. He blamed himself for being impatient with her and he wanted to make amends. Then he recalled what Ailene had told him about Annie and Richard being off so much together, so he decided to go and meet them. He went as far as the foot of the pond without seeing any signs of them but, returning, he thought he heard a sound off in the woods. He stopped to listen and then turned into the woods to investigate. It was all quiet, but suddenly he heard Annie's voice

just beyond, laughing and teasing. An uncontrollable anger seized David; he seized a stick and crashed through the thicket. Annie was on the ground with her dress in disarray, Richard had sprung to his feet. David, towering over him, seized him by the wrist. Richard struggled and swore, "You damned French Indian, what right—" He got no farther, a single twist of David's hand crumpled him. David pulled him to his feet, gave him a shove that sent him headlong into the bushes, and told him to clear out and never be seen about the camp again.

Then David, still angry, turned to Annie, "What does this mean, Annie?" She insolently replied, "What right had you to strike Richard; he never harmed you. You had no right to be following us, anyway."

This made David still more angry, and impulsively he raised the stick as if to strike her. At that moment a revolver shot rang out; David turned hastily to see Richard aiming at him from the bushes. Regardless of danger, David sprang toward him and wrested the revolver from him and tossed it toward Annie. Richard struck at him but the blow was evaded and Richard disappeared toward the camp. When David turned toward Annie, he was amazed to see the revolver in her shaking hand and pointed toward him. He cried out for her to

drop it, but she was too excited to obey. In a moment David sprang toward her and struck her sharply on the wrist. She dropped the revolver and her whole manner changed; she cringed at his feet, not struggling but whining and submissive; her hands clasped his legs and her face was pressed against his knees. She said, "Please don't strike me, Davey. Don't you see how I love you? what do you want me to do?"

David's anger was slowly ebbing away, but still he answered sharply, "Get up, Annie; go home and help Ailene get supper." He watched her as she moved away toward the camp and then strode off through the woods.

When Annie had almost reached the bungalow, she was startled to see Richard come from behind a tree. He asked her where David was, and then told her to get the money she had promised him; he said he had to have it to get out of town. Annie slipped into her room and returned to give it to him, and he quickly disappeared. When Annie returned to the house, Ailene noticing how excited she was, asked what was the matter, and where David was. Annie replied that Richard had come over to say good-bye, and with that she began to cry. It was some time before she could control herself, and then Ailene asked what she went to her room to get for him. Annie replied that he had asked for money so that he could go to Detroit to hunt

for work. She said, "I had to give it to him."

Ailene asked her, "Annie, have you and Richard done anything that you ought not to? Where is David?"

Annie was confused at this direct question and replied, "No, not a thing; we were just saying, good-bye, and David struck him."

David returned for supper, but neither he nor Annie said much, and during the evening they were all very sober. Annie was nervous and ill at ease, and was the first to retire. Ailene was worried as to the effect Richard's going would have on Annie. Later she laid down her work and asked David to excuse her as she wanted to go down by the wharf to see the moon on the water. David offered to go with her but she declined, saying she would rather be alone. David found it hard to fix his thoughts on his book, and after a time he went out to find Ailene; he felt that he must have a talk with her. She was sitting by the wharf, engrossed in thought, and neither spoke for a time. Then Ailene said, "How still it is to-night. I love to hear the water lapping on the shore, and the sound of the frogs in the meadow. What is that odd sound off in the trees?"

David explained that it was a kind of a tree toad; he said he was a long time getting a specimen of it. Then he added, "This silence

isn't much like the roar of the Third Avenue Elevated, is it?"

Ailene asked, "David, how long have you had a camp here?"

David told her of his first visit here when he was five, and of his first shack when he was fourteen. As they were talking, they heard a sound behind them and saw Annie coming toward them, wrapped in her bathrobe. David rose at once, "Why Annie, we thought you were asleep. Come and sit with us. Isn't the night still?" Annie did not reply and after a few words Ailene excused herself, thinking they would like to be alone. After she had gone, Annie slipped to the ground at his side with her arm on his knee as in the early days of the summer. David said nothing. Suddenly Annie burst out, "What were you and Ailene talking about? I'll bet you were talking about me."

"No, Annie, I haven't been here very long; we were talking about the stillness and comparing it with the roar of the Third Avenue Elevated."

Annie said, more to herself than to David, "Gee, but I'd like to hear it again." They were silent for a while, and then suddenly she said, "David, why did you come down here to Ailene and leave me all alone? Don't you love me any more?"

"I thought you were asleep, and I didn't like to have Ailene down here alone."

Annie burst out passionately, "The sneaking cat! I hate her; I wish she'd go away."

David tried to quiet her, but his words only seemed to excite her the more, so he insisted that they return to the bungalow. As they drew near it, Annie's mood seemed to change, she tried to draw his face down and kiss him, but he resisted and started to go on. She gripped his arm and said with undisguised anxiety, "Don't you really love me any more?"

He replied, "Annie, I think it is all a mistake. Do you think we are adapted to each other, enough to be happy together, for very long?"

She sank to the ground, clasping his knees, moaning with inexpressible pathos, "Oh, Davey, don't send me away; please love me a little, Davey; don't you see how I love you?"

David was distressed and at a loss what to say; he regretted that he had said as much as he had. Above all he wanted to talk it over with Ailene. He decided to say nothing but wait for the morning. Again he tried to quiet her and persuade her to go to her room, but in vain. The afternoon experience flashed into his mind. On the spur of the moment he said, sharply, "Go to your room, Annie."

Very submissively she replied, "Yes, Davey, I'll go."

When David reached his cabin he sat for a time on the steps, his mind crowded with disturbing thoughts. He regretted his early indiscretions with Annie. Was he kind and patient with her now? Ought he to stand by his engagement? What would Ailene advise? How calm and sensible Ailene always was. Gradually he became conscious of the rising wind. There seemed to be two notes: an overtone like the sound he had heard last summer, weird, mournful, foreboding, that made him think of winter, and pain, and impermanence. The other was deeper, more harmonious, reassuring. As he listened the overtone ceased and only the comforting harmony remained. He was strangely quieted and went in to fall asleep at once.

The next morning he was up early and after his plunge went to work at the wood pile. By and by Ailene came out and asked where Annie was. David replied that he hadn't seen her, and in his turn asked, "Isn't she in her room asleep?"

A frightened look came into Ailene's eyes and she spoke sharp and quick, "No, her bed is empty; come to the pond quick and see if we can find her."

There was no sign there, but Ailene urged David to take the boat and search along the shore. Down where the ledge jutted out into the pond, he caught sight of her bathrobe on the

shore; he rowed slowly about, peering into the clear water, and at last discovered the body, her hands clutching at the bottom. He went back for Ailene and together they brought the body to the bungalow and laid it on the bed. David was all upset, but Ailene, calm and efficient, took charge of everything: notified the coroner and undertaker, and attended to all the necessary details. Before noon the autopsy had been held and the funeral arranged for the next day

Ailene and little Dick had moved over to the farm house and, when it was all over, David came over and they went apart for a talk. David was still nervous and self-condemning, but Ailene was calm and friendly, avoiding too much emotion or sympathy, and dwelling on the practical details of closing camp and the return to the city. David's aunt had asked for little Dick and they were glad to leave him with her. After a somewhat long silence, David said that he wanted to tell her about his last afternoon and evening with Annie; there was so much that was terrible about it that he dreaded to carry the memory alone. When he had finished, Ailene said she was not altogether surprised— "Let me tell you of her home and childhood. Her father you have seen, a large, hard and unsympathetic man. Her mother was small, timid to a fault and strangely fascinated by her cruel, domineering husband. He had no pity on her and made her

work ever harder and harder until her death. There were only two children, Richard and Annie. They slept together and Annie came to have a passionate love for her big brother. The father was cruel to them, often punishing them for slight causes, and for mutual comfort they got in the habit of hiding and loving each other. It was because of this intimacy that Richard had to leave home. Later Annie had an experience with a hired man who was kind to her, and for it she had to leave home, also. She came to New York and her life there has been a succession of entanglements with men. I had to watch over her all the time. By nature she was very affectionate, but timid and easily discouraged, with no idea of self control. She was very sweet when things went well, but peevish and complaining when she was crossed or discouraged. She had an exceptionally strong sex nature, that she was never able to control and rarely tried to. It made a complex of desire and fear that was almost, if not quite, pathologic. Once she was seriously ill, at a hospital, at another time she took poison. I felt that I ought to tell you this when I first came, but loyalty to her kept me silent; I hoped that by delaying the marriage you would come to see for yourself and appreciate its significance. If she had lived and you had married there would have been disappointment, almost certainly."

David asked how she explained the sudden cringing submissiveness. Ailene said, "It is a kind of perversion; her weak nature got a kind of morbid satisfaction out of your authority that intensified her emotion. Sex-love is sometimes terribly strong and if unrestrained it often works havoc, as it has with Annie. The loss of Richard and the fear of your rejection was too much for her. After all it is far better as it is."

In bidding him good night, Ailene said, "Your aunt has invited me to stay with her next summer; would you like to think of my being here?"

David's reply was cordial and sincere. "Indeed, I would. I want to see you often this winter, and you must come over to the Museum to see me. You haven't given me your city address yet."

"And I want to see you, David. Hitherto I have felt it to be my lot to be kind and helpful to those in need, but with you, from the first, I have felt that it was I who was receiving, and it has made me very happy. Still we must work this winter, next summer will soon be here."

She held out her hand to say good night, and her eyes, as always, were calm and steady and true.

CHAPTER EIGHT

David was so upset by the tragic happenings of the summer that he could hardly settle down to the detail work of arranging the specimens that the expedition had brought back. A certain lack in specimens to complete a desired proof of evolutionary change had already been discovered, which led David to offer to return to the Malay States for another year to complete the collection. His offer was gladly accepted and in a month he was off on the long journey. As he had had no opportunity to meet Ailene to explain his absence and to say good-bye, he wrote to her as best he could.

Once arrived at the field he sought out his missionary friend and arranged to see him occasionally; then he settled down to his solitary task. Being alone for weeks at a time with his native servants he had ample time for study and reflection. He early acquired the habit of jotting down subjects and questions for discussion with his friend when they should meet, and it was from these studies, meditations and conversations that his thoughts as to the meaning of life gradually cleared. Because of his former experience he entered into the technical work with directness and enthusiasm. He became espe-

cially interested in noticing the interaction of life on different planes in co-operative ways. This was plainly seen in the life of primitive bacteria that lived directly on the lifeless world, but, in making it over for their own use, they provided a surplus that was essential for organism on the next higher plane. The same was seen, also, in the higher forms of parasitic nitrifying bacteria that supply a need of all chlorophyllic plants and, in true symbiosis, secured from them the carbon food which they needed themselves. The frequent instances of this that came to his notice impressed him deeply by their significance.

Most scientists believed in a bio-chemical explanation of all living phenomena, with more or less agreement with the Bergson idea of a resident energy that endlessly pushed itself out wherever an opening could be found into ever new and often surprising forms. They believed every change could be described and repeated if all the facts were known. In other words, all inter-atomic attractions, chemisms, vital forces, and even the highest emotions, were all alike explainable in terms of action, reaction and interaction, of this primal and ultimate energy. They were forced to admit that this hypothesis required an immense amount of unifiers, harmonizers, colloids, enzymes, hormones, accelarators, stabilizers, retarders and inhibitors, but asserted

that even these could be best explained by obscure bio-chemical reactions.

David was unable to accept this view as an adequate explanation. He believed, as has been said, in an independent spiritual realm that was co-existent with the physical realm, that permeated and conditioned physical phenomena through the psychic factors of thought and desire. Instead of a simple and orderly evolution under some physical *élan vital*, there was a deeper process going on that had for its goal some spiritual end that included an ever-increasing freedom of spirit. The psychic processes of the mind and emotion, expecially the ideals and aspirations of the human soul, were just as much included facts that must be adequately explained as the physical mechanisms of life, and they demanded for their explanation something more far-reaching than either physico- or bio-chemical reactions.

David's belief was that above the dualism of the physical and spiritual realms there was a supreme Principle that unified their interrelations to some intelligent, purposive and beneficent end. Some such Principle was required to explain the universal presence in nature, and their survival value, of such phenomena as mutual participation and co-operation, not only between individuals and between species, but between orders and realms. To David

the way in which all circles and planes of life, organic as well as inorganic, dwell together in harmonious co-operation and without apparent conflict, was the most marvelous thing in nature. In the case of some lichens this co-operation is so intimate that animal and vegetable cells function as a single organism. In the human organism there are parasitic bacterial growths that are not only beneficial, but actually essential to the vital processes of the body. There is also present the most amazing system of co-ordination by which the many operations work together harmoniously: the interweaving system of hormones and balances by which conditions are automatically adjusted, not only under ordinary conditions, but adjusted instantly to unusual circumstances of danger, of hunger or sex-desire, of anger or fear. Take, for instance, the different endocrine glands which, by their internal secretions, store and release iodine, lime, sugar, in just the right proportions and time to condition the beating of the heart, the rate of breathing, the extreme and unusual demands for reproduction, the process of thought. In all this action and reaction of atomic and cellular life there is constant co-operation and mutual yielding while still maintaining individual freedom for each minutest part. There is independent activity everywhere, but it is planned for a general conservation of gains toward an ulterior end.

In some obscure way, while seemingly independent of each other, organisms unite into progressive series of exceedingly intimate sequence, and these series into more inclusive series. For instance, there is the atomic series of electrons, atoms, molecules, crystals; this series merges into the more inclusive series of cellular life—those in which there is no differentiation of cytoplasm and nucleus, protoplasmic cells, hereditary-chromatin cells; and this series in turn merges into the still more inclusive series of vegetable and animal organisms. The life processes of atoms go on ignorant of the fact that they are the essential of cell construction; while billions of tiny cells are living and dying without knowledge that they are essential to the circulation of the blood, or the thrill of touch, or the mechanism of thought, in the animal series. Take the sperm and ova in human reproduction; they desire each other so intensely that the conscious soul is almost compelled to seek a mate; and when the human satisfies its own hunger, it is unwittingly satisfying the desires of ova and sperm for each other. And when ova and sperm come together, they do so in entire ignorance of the child of man that without them would never be.

David believed that this law of mutual participation and co-operative service was far more fundamental than the better known law of

"variation, struggle, and survival of the fittest." He insisted that observation did not show that struggle was the rule of animate life. It is true there are instances of fighting, and he admitted their importance in the evolutionary process, but claimed that they were exceptions that could better be accounted for by special extremity of hunger, sex-desire, or danger. Far more commonly animals live together in harmony, slaying only to supply necessary food. Nature shows her abhorrence of ruthless slaughter by the earlier dying out of the fiercer carnivorous species before the more co-operative species, who by their life habits practice a larger degree of toleration and helpfulness. If one watches animal life they see far more work and play and mutual yielding than they do fighting. By far the larger part of evolutionary gains are attained by desire and mutual helpfulness.

This truer idea of mutual helpfulness, David believed, ought to characterize our social and national behavior. In the Great War, the Germans, who generally accepted the old idea of the survival of the strong, went down before the aroused response of international co-operation for the common welfare. War is the very antithesis of this fundamental cosmic Principle. The appeal to force can only result in disorder, both social and moral. By good-will and co-

operation alone is freedom and happiness increasingly assured.

His missionary friend was much interested in Taoism and Buddhism, whose philosophies he carefully explained to David. This information as to how other people had developed their ideas of divinity and of the soul, was exceedingly informing to David, because it gave him something with which to compare and test the Christian ideas that had troubled him for so many years. It broadened his outlook and did more than anything else to clarify and systematize his own conception of life.

The year passed quickly and David, much benefited by the absorbing interest of his investigations and his clarifying thinking, returned to New York in the late fall, and began at once to arrange the results of his year's work. He was given the position of Curator in one of the departments of the Museum and was asked to give a course of lectures at the University which, with the work in connection with the report of the Expedition, kept him very busy. There was a very convenient office and laboratory in connection with his department at the Museum, and his friends at the University soon learned of his whereabouts and began to call.

One day, who should come into his department with a party of school children but Ailene. David had written her from the field regularly,

but not often, but had been too busy to let her know of his actual arrival; her coming, therefore, was a very agreeable surprise. After showing them about, David led them into his workroom and let the children look into his microscopes. After the children had filed out, Ailene lingered for a moment to renew their old acquaintance. She did not seek to conceal her pleasure in meeting him, but when he suggested that he would like very much to call on her, she avoided inviting him, but seemed pleased, as she said good-bye, and went away.

Since childhood David never had been in the habit of attending church. The conventional services and sermons of the denomination to which he had belonged rather annoyed him and aroused disputatious feelings, so he got into the habit of staying away. One thing that he liked about the Rector was that he never pressed urgent invitations on him to go to church, but one day after a call from him, the Rector remarked, as he started to leave, that the conversation had suggested a theme for a sermon that he planned to preach the next Sunday and he would be glad to have David present, so that they might talk about it afterwards. David accepted the invitation, and was surprised to see what a beautiful church the Rector had, and what a large and devout audience attended.

The service impressed and satisfied him more

than any he had attended. The feeling of worship pervaded it and the sermon was in keeping with the spirit of worship. The Rector chose for his text the words in Revelation about the gates in the four sides of the Celestial City. He interpreted them as being the bodily, mental, emotional, and spiritual faculties as exercised respectively by the body, mind, soul and spirit. The first three were simple and had bearing on health, success and happiness. The fourth was mystical and a little hard for David to follow. The Rector said that every one had a superconscious faculty through which, by desire and aspiration, one could come into touch with spiritual truth and reality, and thus know a purer and higher experience than one otherwise could.

As David was passing out from the service, his mind was busy with new thoughts, which were interrupted by a pleasant voice saying, "Good morning, Professor Lisle; this is Miss Vanester; do you remember me? I was at your wedding and at your cabin long before that. I was Miss Madison's friend." David apologized for his inattention and was adding other words of greeting, when who should approach but Ailene. The ladies were only slightly acquainted but when David referred to Ailene's visit to the bungalow, they became more interested in each other; and as they were swept along there was an invitation to call that indicated the beginning of

a new friendship. David went with Ailene to her car and asked to go farther, but she declined with a look that said plainly that she would like to have him come, but did not think it wise. This was the beginning of David's attendance at church with regularity and interest. He enjoyed the Rector's sermons; they were never trite nor opinionated, and always seemed to lead to a clearer sense of the reality of a spiritual life. Week by week he met interesting people and their friendly greetings were an increasing delight. Both Miss Vanester and Ailene always went out of their way to greet him and exchange a few words.

When Ailene again called at the office she was less reserved. She spoke of having met Miss Vanester at a church conference and had been told something of David's childhood and loyalty to Miss Madison, while she told Miss Vanester about the joys and sorrows that had been crowded into that tragic summer. As they visited, David noticed what he had not really appreciated before, that her face was beautiful when alight with emotion. He asked again for permission to call, but she evaded it by reminding him that it was *work* this winter; next summer she was to be at his aunt's again and they would have ample time for pleasure. David told her that Professor Santon and his wife were to be with him at the bungalow.

One day, along in the spring, the Rector called and after a general conversation said, "The thing that I came especially to see you about was this camp of yours up in the Berkshires. The fact is, I am planning to take a good long vacation this year to catch up on some writing that has been too long neglected. I wondered if you had a place for me where I wouldn't bother you and where I would be free myself from interruption?" David was only too delighted to give him a cordial invitation. He explained that Professor and Mrs. Santon were to be with him, occupying the bungalow and getting their meals. The Rector could have his cabin for as long as he desired to occupy it and he would fix up Richard's old shack. He explained that Ailene Carter was to be at the farm house, and would help Mrs. Santon at times. He said that as Professor Santon and himself had work planned, that the Rector would be left pretty much to himself. The Rector appeared increasingly pleased as David unfolded his plans and said that everything was exactly as he would like it to be, and thankfully accepted David's invitation.

Later when David had begun to plan for an early start for the farm, Ailene called and said abruptly, "David, would you object if I invited a friend to come with me this summer?"

David's face must have revealed disappoint-

ment, for Ailene added very quickly, "I know, David, you wanted to be alone, and the party gets larger and larger. Let me tell you who it is, and why I want her to come. You will be surprised, I know; it is Miss Vanester. Last Sunday she came to me after service and asked if I would take dinner with her the next evening. At first I did not know what to make of it, for while we had a bowing acquaintance for a number of years, we had never been intimate: she was a rich society woman and I was a poor school teacher. Something gave me the feeling that she really desired me to come so I accepted and I am glad that I did, because I never had a better time in my life. She was cordiality itself and treated me as though we had been friends for a long time. After dinner she invited me to her 'cosy' as she called it, a tiny little sitting room with a fireplace, opening into her bed room. She sat beside me and told me of her acquaintance with Miss Madison and of her visits to the farm. She said that she had long wanted to spend a really free summer in the country, but that something always seemed to prevent. She said that in talking with the Rector a few days before about plans for the girls' work during the summer, he mentioned the fact that he was planning to spend the summer with Doctor Lisle at his camp in the Berkshires, and that you were to be at a near-by farm. She said that after he

had gone it suddenly occurred to her that this might be a good chance to have her own long-desired summer in the country, and she determined to ask if she might go with me. David, let me invite her. I feel sure she has some other reason for asking, but I know she really wants to go. Let us give her the pleasure she desires."

"But, Ailene, what will the Rector say? You know he wanted to be quite alone. I am afraid that Miss Vanester will be more of a burden than a help to you; she evidently knows nothing of work of any kind; she will only add to yours."

"David, how little you know of women. If she has some reason for wanting to do this, she will be happy in doing it. There is no need for mentioning it to him, for the present at least. Perhaps the Rector will notice what a lovely young woman she is,—he might, one can never tell. Please say yes, David, and let me manage it."

"All right, Ailene, but I am afraid there are rocks ahead."

"Possibly, but there is also possible a lovely land of sunshine, if we can get by the rocks. Thanks ever so much. I will let her know."

"But about ourselves, Ailene; if there are going to be so many about, when will we have a chance to get acquainted?"

"David, you know we are not going to talk about that until the summer is over,—or almost over."

CHAPTER NINE

David reached the Pond Woods two weeks before the others and had time to clean up and get things ready for their coming. He decided to build a new cabin for the Rector and keep his own. Mr. and Mrs. Santon appeared next and quietly took possession of the bungalow. She was a comfortable home-body, enjoying company but taking no part in the conversation unless it drifted to knitting or cooking. Sometimes her husband would twit her about her "loquacity," but her only reply would be a funny little chuckle she had and an understanding nod. Once, when they had unsuccessfully tried to get an opinion from her, her husband remarked, "You ought to hear her talk when she is alone with me." Ailene came with Grace in her car, the chauffeur returning for his own vacation leaving the car for her to run herself. The Rector did not come for several weeks.

They were a very congenial company from the beginning. Much to their surprise, Miss Vanester, or Grace, as they soon fell into the habit of calling her, proved to be a decided acquisition. She was a little older than Ailene, fuller of figure, but not as tall, with a lovable face, laughing eyes and glorious dark hair. She was

always in good spirits, seeing only the pleasant side of things. Besides her perfect manners, she had a wonderfully sweet voice that had been carefully trained and, by persuading David to accompany her on his violin, she provided very delightful music. Mrs. Santon remarked once that she didn't always understand what they were talking about, but she did enjoy Grace's music.

The Professor and David usually had a plunge in the pond early in the morning and then worked about the grounds until breakfast; after that they would work at their studies, or David would do the necessary errands. At four they gathered for any social activities that had been planned. Frequently on pleasant evenings the ladies would join them at lunch upon the ledge, and afterwards they would spend the evening in conversation and music. To all, these evenings on the ledge were the best part of the day. There was no nervous chatter or forced gaiety; often they would sit for minutes at a time in silence, listening to the woodland sounds, or the lapping of the water at the base of the ledge.

At such times it was interesting to see how naturally each revealed his characteristic bent. The Professor, who was older than the rest, was generally content to smoke and listen; when he did enter into the conversation, he was rather materialistic in his comments and exact in his

statement of facts. David, on the contrary, was more mystical and imaginative. The Professor came to definite conclusions from consideration of accumulated facts; David more often *felt* a thing to be true. But in spite of these temperamental differences they were warm friends; and if ever absent of an evening they could usually be found in one of the cabins playing chess.

Ailene was always sensible and practical. She always seemed "to fit in." David, especially, felt the charm of her unobtrusive and responsive personality. His acute sense of hearing was soothed by her voice, full of music and vibrating with life but quiet withal and well controlled. David never could decide whether he liked it best in the hush and stillness of the deep woods, or in the open freedom of fields and hill tops where the clouds overhead and the grasses underneath and the air over all are all thrilling in an exquisitely harmonious vibration. David had not known many women and he usually felt a little shy in their presence, but with Ailene the possibility of self-consciousness or shyness never entered his mind. She had as good a mind as the men, but no disposition to compete or criticise, she really enjoyed listening and by her attention stimulated the others.

Grace was the life of the group; she was always tactful and alert, the one who saved up jokes and funny stories to have them ready when it

was rainy and dreary out-of-doors. The two girls usually sat together holding hands. David used to secretly wonder which was responsible for their doing so. After observation he concluded that it was Grace who usually took the initiative but that Ailene seemed to like it most. They were never sentimental about it, they were both too well bred for that; it was simply the natural thing for them to do.

It was into this group early in July that the Rector came. They were all a little curious to see what difference his presence would make, and it was a relief to them all, when in friendly comradeship, he fell at once into their routine. He accepted the presence of Grace without comment. His presence was an especial gain to their evening conversations; while he was never "heavy," he added a certain touch of earnestness and thoughtfulness that changed their hitherto inconsequential chatter to worth-while exchange of ideas. He had a gift for bringing out the deeper implications of often casual words and making them the starting point from which opened out most alluring vistas of discussion. He always added something from his rich and overflowing mind, but he did it in such a way as to give the impression that the real treasure of thought was the remark of the previous speaker, and that his words were merely supplementary.

These evening talks, after the Rector came, were the most treasured memories of the summer. They covered all kinds of subjects suggested by their readings or by some chance remark. At first there were discussions about biological subjects between the Professor and David, but, after the Rector came, the subjects took on a more religious and philosophical turn. One evening they discussed socialism and economics. On this evening David defended socialism on the ground that if the Law of Love was applied to industry and economics some form of socialism was bound to result. The Professor maintained that if the Law of Love was in force, it made little difference what form of economics was in force, and as individualism was so ingrained in human nature it would continue to be some form of that. They all agreed, however, that private profit as a motive was not satisfactory, and that "service" would be a better motive, if human nature could develop enough to make it workable.

One whole evening was given up to a discussion of marriage, divorce and birth control; it was a surprise to all to see how easy it was to talk over these things frankly and dispassionately. Here again the Law of Love was seen to be the safest guide. They were all agreed that there was much to gain and little to lose by the free dissemination of sex information. The

limitation of births to voluntary parentage and favorable circumstances, they were also agreed upon, provided the rule could be applied to all levels of society so as to avoid any excess of births on the less-fit eugenic levels. The subject of divorce was much more difficult; the Rector stood out strongly against all the rest for stricter laws. The others favored a law that would permit divorce, where observance of the Law of Love was absent, without unnecessary difficulty or temptation to perjury and incrimination, especially where both parties desired it.

On another evening the Professor stood out against the others in asserting the inevitableness of war and a corresponding necessity for preparedness, though he joined with the others in denouncing war as the very antithesis of the Law of Love. They agreed that modern war was largely caused by the spirit of nationalism becoming aroused by the secret activity of "big business"; that it involved economic greed and waste, unbelievable destruction of wealth, appalling loss of the selected best of a nation's youth. It involved the use of frightful means, poison gases, bombs and starvation. It involved secret propaganda, lawless suppression of independent thought, arbitrary limitation of civil liberties; and at the close, treaties of peace that are framed in hate and national greed, that are pregnant with political unrest, economic

distress, unlawful dictatorships, and arbitrary rules of force. The outcome of the Great War, they were agreed, revealed beyond dispute that any advantage to be derived from war was altogether an illusion. The superiority of international good-will and co-operation, which is the Law of Love applied to politics, was unitedly accepted. As to Pacifism, they agreed that the early Christian form of simple non-participation was far better than any mode of irritating denunciation or active propaganda. The Quaker willingness to co-operate, in times of war, in acts of love and mercy, was also approved.

One evening David told them what he had learned while in the East about Taoism and Buddhism, and it proved to be especially useful in enlarging their ideas of religion. It is so natural for those who have only known Christian ideas of religion to think of all other ideas as pagan and superstitious and relatively of little value. The talk about Buddhism, also, led them to ask the Rector to defend the Christian idea of God. The Rector began by saying that the conventional ideas were a blend of Hebrew theistic ideas and Greek philosophy that had developed under Roman conditions, and had passed through fifteen hundred years of reasoning, almost exclusively of a dialectic nature, and under the close and prejudiced supervision and censorship of an ambitious and powerful hier-

archy. The possibility of considering theistic arguments from different angles in the light of modern science, both physical and historical and psychical, without temperamental or racial prejudice, has been possible only in the last few decades. The Rector said that David had referred to the teachings of Laotsu and Gautama and he wanted to refer to the teachings of Plato. "We believe that in Christian revelation we have the clearest and best thought about God, but doubtless the Holy Spirit from the beginning has been leading men to a search after God; there is, therefore, a good deal of what is called pagan thought that is worthy of consideration. This is especially true of Greek thought. During seven hundred years the Greeks produced some of the greatest minds the world has seen, and of these Plato was probably the greatest.

"Plato taught that at the Source was The One, and It was above and beyond thought. From this One emanated all else in successive waves that were ever less in purity and potency as they became separated from the Source. The One is first perceived in the threefold conception of the Principle of Intellection, the Thought World, and Thought in creative activity. The word, Thought, is a poor translation of the Greek word, *nous*, which Plato used. It is often translated, Spirit, but that is less satisfactory because we read into Spirit the idea of personality. The

Greek word included the perfect mingling of vision, desire, activity, as in the Principle of Intellection. Some of the most exquisite thoughts ever expressed are in the words of Plotinus as he attempts to describe this Incomprehensible One as It is reflected in the world of Thought. He asserts that It is a blending of the three ideas of the Good, the True and the Beautiful. But of the three he is unable to say which is the First, although he often uses the Good as interchangeable with the One. Through this principle of Intellection, the One radiates outward into more and more remote zones. First into Spirit, then into Universal Soul, then into soul-life, into nature, into life, into substance, into form, into next-to-nothing matter-without-form; each successive zone being a combination of that which is nearer the Source with that which is more remote. For instance, soul is the combination of natural life which is below, with Spirit which is above. As things approach the Source, therefore, they include more and more of the Divine.

To the Platonists all things that exist in nature, or in the mind, or in the spiritual realm, are endlessly varying combinations of these. The energy motivating the ever-changing forms is the nature of the One, forever seeking self-expression, and forever desirous for reunion. Soul is forever seeking by self-sacrifice to give form to

life and nature; while, on the other hand, by aspiration and faith, it is just as endlessly seeking unity and intimacy with spirit. Spirit, by the same law, is forever self-giving to soul, and forever aspiring to unity with the One.

"Thus we see that while Christianity is holding to a belief in a transcendent personal God, who creates all things and rules all things by the fiat of His Supreme Will, the Platonists were basing their faith on the Goodness, Beauty and Truth of the One as seen in the Intellective Principle. About the time of Christ there was in Alexandria a school under a Jew named Philo that offered a harmony of Hebrew theism and Greek Platonism. Paul and the writer of John's gospel were evidently acquainted with these teachings of Philo. Later a succession of Christian scholars like Origen and Saint Augustine incorporated more and more of these Platonic ideas into Christianity, until to-day the Greek tradition, as the basis of the more mystical thought of Christianity, is side by side with the Hebrew idea of a personal God.

"But it is only fair to state that most of the pagan beliefs include some conception of personality in the nature of the Divine. Laotsu more than once just escapes calling Tao, God. He writes, '*The Tao appears to be emptiness, but is never exhausted. O, it is profound: It appears to have preceded everything. O, it is tranquil! It*

appears infinite. I do not know from what it proceeds. It even appears to be God's (ti's) antecedent.' And again he says, '*Knowledge of the Tao, how vast! I am like a sailor far beyond a place of anchorage, adrift on a boundless ocean. Common people are useful, I am awkward—I stand in contrast to them. But, O the prize I seek is food from Mother Tao!*' Even Christian missionaries in their search for a Chinese word to translate John's idea of the Logos, use this very word, *Tao.*

"To Buddhist philosophers, the *Tathagata*, or Truth, that lies back of the Law, involves so infinite a wisdom and mercy that *Tathagata* takes on a personal aspect. It is the incarnation, the personalization of Truth in Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and especially in the compassionate purity of Amitabha, the Lord of Boundless Life and Light, and in the loving kindness of Kwan-yin, the Goddess of Mercy, that we see the incarnation of the Divine Compassion and Self-giving, that makes their primitive atheism fall little short of the Christian conception of the Divine Personality.

"And Plotinus by his exaltation of the Beauty and Goodness of the One makes It so adorable that the suggestion of personality is unavoidable. Plotinus writes, '*Therefore we must ascend again toward the Good, the desired of every soul. Everyone who has seen This knows what I intend when I say that It is beautiful. Even the desire for It is to*

be desired as a Good. To attain It is for those who will take the upward path, who will set all their forces toward It, who will divest themselves of all they have put on in their descent;.....until, passing, on the upward way, all that is other than the Good, each in the solitude of himself shall behold that solitary-dwelling Existent, the Apart, the Unmingled, the Pure, that from which all things depend, for which all look and live and act and know, the Source of Life and of Intellection and of Being. And one that shall know this vision, with what passion of love shall he be not seized, with what pangs of desire, what longing to be molten into one with This, what wondering delight;..... 'Let us flee then to the Fatherland.' This is the soundest of advice. But what is this flight? How are we to gain the open sea?.....The Fatherland is There whence we have come, and There is the Father.' Christians of mystical temperament of all ages have found no difficulty in interpreting Platonic ideas as perfectly applicable to their faith in a personal God, who, Himself, is Good and True and Beautiful.

"Christians believe that nothing but a Transcendent Person can account for all the apparent purpose, rationality, design, and beauty of the Universe. To illustrate this, take the presence of beauty in nature. It so forces itself on our attention that we can not conceive it to be merely accidental. Our reason insists that there is an

intention to be beautiful which communicates with and corresponds with a beauty loving and perceiving faculty. It indicates so special a purpose that it demands a prior Mind to have made it so.

"Christians believe also that a thing must be interpreted by the highest of its products: if man has intelligence, God must be infinitely wise; if man is sensitive to moral distinctions, God must be pure and holy; if man is conscious of free will, much more must God's Will be unlimited and transcendent; if man reacts against his environment with definite purpose, no less must God over-rule all things by His Sovereign Will. This we find asserted by Hebrew prophets and confirmed by the life and teachings of Jesus. While freely admitting that Christians often exaggerate the anthropomorphic and legalistic implications in their conception of a Personal God, one feels very strongly that there is less danger of running into error in this direction than in any other. And Christianity has this crowning value, that it provides in the conception of a Personal God, and of the soul's relation to Him, for the full realization of Love in fellowship, service and moral responsibility."

Grace interrupted to say, "Excuse me, Rector, but one thing has always troubled me: instinctively I think of God as supremely Loving; but

you seem to emphasize, as most ministers do, His Sovereign Will as of first importance."

"It does appear so on the surface, I admit; but Jesus did not set aside the old Hebrew conception of an Almighty God; He only insisted that the Will of God was loving."

"But Rector," said Grace, "The Bible says God is Love. It seems to me that when that is asserted, it is saying far more than, God's Will is loving."

"It does sound so when you phrase it like that, I admit," replied the Rector, "But still I can not see that we have a right to read into the words more than I have indicated."

Ailene came to the help of Grace by saying, "I think with Grace that the teachings of Jesus as to the nature of God do make Love superior to Will. Jesus never hesitated to set aside the teachings of the older rabbis. On this very point he said, 'It has been said of old, ye shall hate your enemies; but I say unto you, love your enemies.' It has always appealed to me that Jesus *was* setting aside some very fundamental teaching of the Rabbis, and substituting in its place an entirely new conception. The idea that God's Will was characterized by Love was no new conception; Moses and the Prophets had said the same, but the fact that God *was* Love was an entirely new teaching and was of profound significance. It practically meant, did it not?

that the old Hebrew idea of an anthropomorphic Jehovah controlling all things by His Sovereign Will, was not wholly true; it meant that their cherished idea of Jehovah God must be changed to conform to the more universal idea of a Principle that was of Itself wise, beneficent and unitive. This primal Principle, to which even their idea of God must conform, was Love. Excuse me, Rector, for differing from you so strongly, but it seems to me that this distinction is fundamental, if there is ever to be a universal religion."

There was silence for a moment, and then the Rector said, "I think, Ailene, that you and Grace are nearer right than I was. I want to beg pardon of Grace for my lack of appreciation of the point she raised. We preachers get so in the habit of enlarging on one doctrine, and of speaking with no chance for contradiction, that we often leave another doctrine of equal or more importance out of focus. I have lived too much by myself, in my own mind, perhaps; it is a revelation to be here with minds the equal of my own. Sometimes, this summer, I have felt that Grace and you had a finer faculty for discerning Truth than I have; you seem to know directly what I have to grope for with my intellect. But coming back to this subject of God as Love, I wish that some evening David would give us his thoughts."

CHAPTER TEN

On an evening in early September, they were finishing their lunch on the ledge, when Grace remarked that they were yet to have the pleasure of hearing David's ideas about God, and suggested it would be a good time then. David tried to evade the issue, but they all urged it. At first he was confused in mind, as to what he did believe. He never was good in arranging his thoughts in a systematic way; his mind seemed to rebel at orderly thinking and he was always at a disadvantage in a debate; on the other hand, he experienced real satisfaction in letting his mind run free under the ever-shifting influences of his surroundings. That is why he liked the woods and isolation, rather than the strain and jangle of many minds. As usual, under the subtle influence of the twilight and the evening stillness, his mind wandered away from the particular question that Grace had asked to a kind of wonder and curiosity as to what life really meant, and how good and beautiful must be the Something that lay only partly hidden behind all its charm and delight.

In a curious way his thoughts wandered off to other days and rested on the memory of Mary's dreams. It came to him as though the compan-

ionable trees were whispering it. So, when he began to speak, it was to say that he wished to speak about certain dreams that Mary, his wife, had; but before he began he wished the Professor would tell them what he thought was the best scientific explanation of dreams. The Professor replied that he thought Freud's was as good as any; that the mechanism of the mind, being relieved of the control of the conscious mind during sleep, was then free to function under stimuli that at other times were too weak to compete. In sleep the submerged memories of long forgotten desires, especially those that had involved some extreme emotional reaction like fear, or like some strong sex-desire that had been repressed because it was considered to be wrong or impossible, were able to register on the temporarily unguarded faculty, in a vain effort toward wish fulfilment. This was especially true when some recent experience provided a suitable symbolism from which to start.

The Rector observed that, as far as his own dreams were concerned, recent troubles were more often the cause than long-forgotten wishes. It seemed as though he carried over into sleep the day's troubles in an effort to solve them.

David said that Freud's explanation did not altogether satisfy him. In his own case, besides the dreams that were suggested by recent troubles or suppressed wishes, there are some

that are motivated, not by his own forgotten experiences, but by a kind of race memory. These memories are in a sense keener than the memory of transient personal experience, because they are ingrained in the living, throbbing lives of the myriads of infinitesimal cells of which the body is composed. We are conscious of this race memory as instincts, appetites, moods, passions, and as seen in the ordinary functioning of the body. Even more does this race memory register in one's dreams; but perhaps Freud's explanation would cover even these.

Then there is another type of dream that is very different from these: the kind of dreams that Evelyn Underhill distinguishes as "visions." These have certain characteristics of logical sequence, ideality, and impressiveness, that mark them out as of higher origin than common dreams. Visions are easily remembered, dreams are either not remembered at all, or are quickly forgotten. Visions always leave behind a conviction of authority and nobility that forever after remains to enhance one's life and ideals. While most dreams are motivated from below, visions seem to have their origin from above. Dreams refer to the past, visions are intimations of the future. We recognize in our conscious minds a kind of spiritual intuition that is very different from instinct, by reason of which we are sensitive to the ebb and flow of spiritual truth.

Such emotions as religious awe, faith, desire, hope, the sense of beauty and goodness, do not come from lower physical sources. In visions, one is in touch with this higher spiritual reality.

Then David asked Grace, who had known Mary, to tell the others about her. Grace replied that she had known Mary very well, for they had grown up together. When only five and six they used to tease their mothers to let them stay with each other over night, and they went to school together. Mary as a child was light-hearted, affectionate and very romantic. As she grew up she seemed to develop a dual nature: one side was affectionate as when a child, the other was sober and reserved. About the time she graduated from college she had a very deep religious experience that accentuated the more reserved side of her nature by convincing her that she was very wicked and sinful by nature. Her mother added to this feeling by her own almost puritanic piety. This division of personality made her morbid at times and we all thought it hastened her early sickness and death. But we all loved Mary for her good side and excused the other.

David then continued to say that the first of these dreams came when Mary was only about fifteen and continued at irregular intervals to the time of her death, and usually came soon after some emotional experience. She always referred

to them as "that dream," although they varied a good deal.

There were other dreams but the final one that came after their marriage was especially clear. There were boys and girls, all quite natural and exceedingly bright and attractive. She was dressed as a kind of a Queen of the May and there were many other girls about. In the play she was hidden and was to be the prize to the boy who found her. As the time arrived there was great excitement, racing, laughing, shouting, as the boys sought the Queen. At last she was found and to her delight the boy who found her was the one she desired. As in all the other dreams, when they were together in their happiness, they saw a vague, mysterious, far away "form"; and as she came back to consciousness, she was sure that the obscure "form" was herself. Just before she died, she exclaimed, "The *Form*? I see the Form? It is the Lord."

David asked the Professor if he thought that the dream came under Freud's definition. The Professor replied, "It certainly is remarkable. Far be it from me to detract from its mystery and glamour by the cold analysis of science. The dream is easily accounted for on the assumption that all her life there had been an unsatisfied desire for companionship that her religious bringing up had condemned and that she had tried to suppress. She could hide the desire in her

waking hours, but could not keep it from her dreams. If the significance of these dreams had been appreciated in time, her illness and suffering and early death might been avoided."

David asked him, "In what way might her sickness have been avoided?"

"Well, if you do not mind my speaking bluntly, there were two ways open. The first would have been more normal and positive: she should have married when she was much younger and have learned by experience that mental condemnation of sex-desire was wrong, and, on the contrary, was normal, useful and rewarding. The second course would have been to change, radically, her whole point of view, which is generally a very difficult thing to do, but changed it must have been if she was to escape the natural and inevitable consequences of a mind divided against itself and against one of the most fundamental principles of nature."

"But the 'form,' " said David, "that certainly is not memory; that at least appears to be something above and beyond her experience."

"Not necessarily," answered the Professor. "Grace referred to the intensity of her religious convictions; the desire to see the form of the Divine has always been a characteristic of mystical experience, and religious and sex desires are very closely akin."

Ailene interrupted to say, "But tell us, David,

how these dreams enter into your conception of God?"

Then David continued, saying that at the same period that Mary was having these dreams, he was having a recurrent dream also. In it he always saw his mother above him calling and urging him to follow or to search. He was very much impressed by it and he felt that Mary's dream-vision had a deep and hidden meaning that it would pay to search out; and this search had immensely enriched his philosophy of life, and, along with it, his ideas of God. The dreams seem to tell the life experiences of atoms, cells and organisms, and reveal the fact that they are very similar to our own life drama. Life on each plane is lived in ignorance of any other plane, yet under the special circumstances of affectionate love, they get a hint of a larger and more inclusive life, that, in some obscure way, they feel to be their own. The way in which the many planes of life live and function in co-operative interdependence, is one of the most amazing things in biological science. In our own bodies, inconceivably minute protons and electrons, atoms and molecules, protozoa and metazoa, protoplasmic and germplasmic cells, in colonies and organisms; pairing off, multiplying, dividing, living and dying, in every organ and part and faculty, are in harmonious

relationship but ignorant of each other's self-hood.

Mary's vision just before she died revealed the added thought that the All-enveloping, All-inclusive Form was for her, at least, the Form of her Lord; and in some sense at her death she was unified with Him. That is, the dreams reveal the fact that each life is progressively unified in a larger life, and, under some circunstamces, each tiny life can participate in its higher type of life with its clearer vision, its deeper understanding, and its more exquisite enjoyment; and the realization of all this comes from and with its own response to love. The dream uncovered a reality of a higher degree than we are ordinarily conscious of. Taking the dreams then as a basis, let us try to discover what is implied in them. In the first place, we see a series of planes of life, each conscious of only its own plane, except at the rare times when, yielding to the impulse of love, they get a hint of the plane next above them. There may be planes of life with more ethereal bodies that we know nothing about, but the highest of these planes must be the All-inclusive Universal Body, and, by analogy, its mind will be the Mind of God.

Now, just as one's own mind includes, unifies and dominates the infinitude of lesser minds that are included in its body complex, so the Divine

Mind includes, unifies and dominates the infinitude of lesser minds that are included in the Universal Complex. The verse in Hebrews that reads, "*They without us shall not be made perfect*," refers to the successive time series of believers, but in a far deeper sense it is true also of that fourth-dimension series of progressive mansions of life that co-exist at the same time. Protons and electrons are not perfect without the cell and the organism, and without our conscious mind and without God's all-inclusive Spirit. On every plane of life there is something akin to our desire for each other. The human sperm and ova desire each other with an intensity that laps over into the human effort to satisfy its own desire, which, all unconsciously, is satisfying their like desire. We pant for pure fresh air, for warmth of body, for food and water and by the effort that we make to satisfy these cravings, we satisfy the same cravings in the cells of the blood, and lungs, and stomach; and in the simpler cells of which they are composed, and in the atoms that compose them all.

In like manner, our needs and insistent desires, all unconscious to ourselves are registered in the Mind of God in a similar sense of need and desire; and His overruling love and thoughtfulness and power satisfies our own needs as he satisfies His own. Only, in His All-inclusive Mind, He understands and sympathizes with

all the included and interwoven levels of living need and hunger. That is, all the mansions of life from infinitesimal atoms to vastest constellations are included in one throbbing, living Body, and are dominated and vitalized by one All-inclusive Soul.

In these dreams we see that the most wonderful of our own experiences, the thrill and beauty of love, is the universal experience on all the planes of life. But as the consciousness of love in the mind of amoeba is less than the consciousness of it in humans, even immeasurably less is our consciousness of the vision and ecstasy of love, when compared with His supernal Joy. The extreme ecstasy of mortal experience is the commonplace of the life above.

In the human mind love occupies relatively a small place, in some minds hardly any, but even then it is far freer than in the minds of lesser organisms; but in the Mind of God it becomes so free and dominating that the Principle of Love is one with the Ineffable Spirit. Nothing less can explain the harmonious interaction and co-operative helpfulness of the Universe except the conception that Love is its very Spirit. God is not outside the Universe, He transcends it only in the sense that our own soul transcends our body.

The only conception of God that is at all satisfying, he said, is thus based by analogy on

biological and psychological experience. Such an analogy can never be held as proven to the intellect, possibly, but it can be held in satisfying faith. One can live sanely and happily on the assumption that God is the Soul of the Universe, and one with the Principle of Love. It is true that this conception leaves no ground for the exaggerated importance that Christian theologians have always placed on sin and moral responsibility. This Christian idea of sin is carried to its extreme in the doctrine of original sin and eternal punishment. A good statement of it is found in the writings of Walter Hinton, a Fourteenth Century mystic: "*This image made to the image of God in the first shaping was wonderly fair and bright, full of burning love and ghostly light. But through sin of the first man Adam, it was disfigured and forshapen into another likeness, as I have before said. For it fell from that ghostly light and that heavenly food into that painful murkness and lust of this wretched life; exiled and cast out from the heritage of heaven that it should have had if it had stood still, into the wretchedness of this earth and afterward into the prison of hell, there to have been without end.*"

According to biology this dogma is quite impossible. Man is a definite product of an age-long evolutionary development. He has developed from low beginnings to his present condition under cosmic laws over which he had no

control. There was no "*first shaping that was wonderly fair*," and no loss of innocency by evil choice in Eden's garden. Instead there was the Neanderthal cave-man, slowly, painfully, groping his way upward through milleniums toward spiritual freedom.

We do not blame the cells of the foot for leading one into temptation; it is the conscious mind that is responsible for the direction the feet go. So God is responsible, if any one is, for many a so-called sin that has most unjustly been ascribed to a human being. The cells of the foot are responsible for loyal co-operation in the team play of the body, and one's conscious mind is responsible for loyalty to love in the team play of spirit. The soul is responsible for the thoughtful care of the body, for loyal service to the neighbor, and for loyal love for God with all one's mind and soul. No, the chief concern of Love with sin is not to punish it to satisfy an imaginary divine justice, but is to set the soul free—to help free all matter, all life, all soul, from their impeding limitations—that they may have more freedom and beauty, and thus add to and share the Divine Happiness.

This conception of God as the Soul of the Universe permits us to profit by that which makes Christianity unique and superior to all other religions, namely, it permits the human soul to aspire to humble, grateful, loving fellow-

ship with God. This fellowship is not something that is conjured up from involved dialectics, it is an extension of the common experience on all planes of life and, as we see it in the unified life of the component cells, in the human body under its lordship of soul in the age-long aspiration upward. It is the noblest reach of human desire and aspiration for the simple continuation of transitory human life, into the higher freedom and joy of Eternal Life. Of this unified life in God we have a foretaste in the rhythm of health and joy that comes with the thought of it; in the satisfaction of mutual service and co-operation; in the thrill of sex-love, in the profound satisfaction of religious faith and worship.

"This vision of God will not disclose an external Being, high and lifted up; rather it will be an awareness of an unseen Spirit and its pervasive Glory. This was made clear to me in another dream that came in the Malay jungle when I was blind and nearly helpless. It seemed to me, in this more-than-a-dream, that I was one of a large company of old and young who were out for an afternoon picnic on a hillside. It was a perfect day among the sunny days of June. We were slowly making our way upward, enjoying the flowers, the fragrance, the distant views and the loving companionship. Over all there was a great peace; even the animals felt it, for the birds, the rabbits, and the deer followed,

singing and gamboling without fear or any sense of strangeness. I was walking with friends, Mary was near with a group of children. A great lion came out of the woods and joined them, and all the children when they saw him ran shouting to climb over him and pull at his tail. I remember looking over the scene with profound happiness and gratitude; it was all so friendly and good and beautiful.

"As we neared the shoulder of the hill where we could look over a smiling, fruit-laden valley to the purple mountains beyond, there suddenly came over us a feeling of awe and thrilling expectancy. The lion lay down and got up again, and whined as a dog whines when he feels his master's returning nearness. The children stopped their play and shouts, to look about them and to go to their parents. Mary came over to me and took my hand as we looked questioningly into each other's eyes. What appeared like an angel, although she was illusive and unseen, was hovering near, smiling. I asked her, "What is it? What is about to happen?"

"The angel replied reassuringly, 'The Lord is here.'

"Even as she spoke the heavens were alight with a surpassing splendor and glory. The far-off hills took on a pink translucent haze, the air was aquiver with opalescent tints, and over all

rested an indescribable harmony and peace. 'Where is He? What will He be like?' I asked.

"The angel replied, 'He is already here. He is nearer than breathing.'

"Mary pressed my hand and whispered, 'Don't try to think, David. He is our love for all things and for each other. God *is* Love.'

"Then I understood that the Divine was not to be seen with eyes of sense as of bodily form, but being one's own Over-Soul, He is above all, in all, through all; and is to be recognized only as one becomes aware of Him in the exalted moments of human love, as one's own Highest Self."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

One day a chance remark by the Rector, that he missed his stenographer, led Ailene to offer her services. The Rector accepted her services, and it seemed a great relief to him. This brought them into closer acquaintance and, noticing that her literary judgment was exceptionally good, he fell into the habit of talking his thoughts over with her before committing them to writing. This resulted as the weeks went by in an increasing friendship. Occasionally on some beautiful day they would take their work outside to some quiet place under the trees, as a consequence of which, Grace was left considerably to herself, especially during the mornings. As David had no motor car of his own (he said, playfully, that he disliked them because they demanded so much attention that it left him no freedom for thought) it came about that Grace offered to take him about on his errands to neighboring towns. They found each other congenial and as the weeks went by they were together a good deal, not only on these trips but at tennis and on walks.

One day when Grace and David were returning from a tramp about the pond they came on the Rector and Ailene at the edge of the woods.

Writing materials were about, but they evidently had been enjoying an intermission. Grace and David dropped on the ground near them and joined in the conversation, which soon developed into gaiety and laughter. It lasted for a few moments and then Grace and David went on.

They walked in silence for a little while; once David started to speak, but something in Grace's manner checked him. Later, as he glanced toward her, he caught her eye and it was perplexed and troubled. She said, "David, do you think the Rector likes Ailene? I can't bear to think of it—for your sake."

"Why, Grace, does it mean so much to you, too?"

"Yes."

They neither intended to do it, but before they thought, she was crying softly on his shoulder. He patted her softly and said, "We mustn't let it trouble us. It can't be true; I would trust Ailene anywhere."

"Thank you, David." But still she clung to him, hiding her face on his sleeve. After a while he said, "Come, Grace, don't let us worry about it. Worry and fear are two hobgoblins who are very fearsome when allowed to prowl about and hide in dark corners, but they aren't really of much account if faced and 'boo-ed.' Gather yourself together, that's a good girl, and *trust*, Grace, trust in *Love*."

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That evening the talk drifted around to the nature of the soul. The Professor referred to it rather disparagingly as "merely fleeting consciousness." Grace was much disturbed by this and asked the others if they thought the soul was such a temporary thing as that. She remarked that it would be terribly discouraging to think that the real "I" was as transient a thing as the body.

The Rector answered, "At first it does seem rather discouraging, after making as much of the soul as we Christians have; but the 'consciousness' which the Professor admits is present may have more reality than he is inclined to admit. This question as to the nature of the soul is very old and has been of perennial interest. There have always been two schools of thought about it: one asserted that the soul was an entity that had an existence of its own; the other defended the idea that the soul was an obscure function of the body that died with it. But very often these two schools were not so far apart as their definitions indicated. For instance, Plato was one of those who said that the soul as such had no existence; that is, it was a combination of physical body and spirtual mind that waxed and waned as the proportion of body and spirit varied. In some persons the appetites and passions are so prominent and uncontrolled that there is very little soul present, they are almost

animals. On the contrary, the soul may so take on the finer things of spirit, love, faith, goodness, and beauty, that the body drops out of importance in a freer life of spirit. But this is not denying the reality of soul, this is only asserting its changeableness."

David interrupted to say, "Gautama taught his disciples that what men called soul was only the conscious part of the body which, after suffering all the pains of unsatisfied desires, expired with death of the body."

The Rector replied, "Yes, that is true of primitive Buddhism, but Gautama also taught that, while the soul expired, it left behind a *Karma*. The karma is not the soul; it is rather the specification of a soul, 'a soul idea,' that leads only a shadowy existence until it is expressed in body. This karma is something like what we call fate or retribution. It is the totality of desires and habits as they condition the soul. It includes the effect of the sins and desires not only of the self but of the innumerable lives that have previously lived under this particular karma. It will go on, also, to condition the lives of innumerable rebirths under its specifications. This would continue in endless repetitions of births and rebirths, until the handicap could be overcome by a life, or lives, of moral excellence, when this particular karma, or soul-idea, being now free of desire and impurity, would have lost

its particularity and would have become the same as Nirvana, the state of Moral Purity. The bubble would vanish in the ocean.

"Gautama knew from bitter experience how hard it was for the soul to overcome its karma by one's own effort. As a wealthy prince he had failed to find happiness and peace. After years of extreme asceticism he had also failed to crush out desire. The enlightenment that came to him under the Bo tree was a revelation of the fact that back of the Law of Causation was Truth; a comprehension of this Truth and a willingness to conform to its demands was the only Way of Salvation. The recognition and appreciation of the surpassing purity and peace of this Truth as Nirvana—compared with which the gratification of any other desire was as nothing—was the Way of Salvation. When the eyes could be fixed on this Pure Land of Moral Excellence, when all physical desires were subdued and the heart filled with compassion toward all other living things, then was the karma fulfilled: the soul-idea had become the same as the Perfect Idea. Salvation to the Buddhist does not mean the salvation of his individual soul, it means the ending of a false idea and with its ending the ending of countless rebirths and their inevitable pain. The bodhisattvas are those supremely unselfish souls who, having attained the term, are unwilling to enter Nirvana until all the world

can enter with them. This it is that makes the character of a sincere Buddhist so unselfishly noble. Later Buddhism of the Mahayana type, perhaps under the influence of early Gnostic Christianity, has taken on many similarities to Christianity: thoughts of individual salvation through faith in Amitabha have taken the place of the impermanence of the soul. Faith has taken the place of the Eight-fold Path, and faith in the loving mercy of Kwan-yin supplements the weakness of human determination. But still the soul is transitory and impermanent, and being transitory, sin and its legal relations has little meaning or interest to Buddhists. They often use the symbol of water in a small bay that is seemingly separate from the ocean without, but the ebb and flow of the tide show that its separateness is an illusion; it is all ocean, and the only thing that makes it seem different is the jutting land that locks it in. What seems a soul is not an entity; the thing that makes it seem so is the illusion of body that temporarily binds it in; but with the subduing of physical desires the soul-idea is seen to be, what it truly is, The Truth Itself."

Grace said, "But this is not Christian, is it? I thought that we believed '*in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting*'? To me the hope of seeing relatives and friends, who have gone

before, is almost as precious as the hope of seeing my Savior."

The Rector answered, "That was the common hope of the Church, but it was a hope rather than a certainty. It is a belief that has grown from the common desire of the bereaved ones to find comfort in the thought of reunion. It is a general feeling that after the death of the body the soul enters a spiritual life, there to take up tasks and to renew ties at very much the same stage at which they were dropped at death; this is interesting and superficially attractive, but it has no Biblical or scientific basis. In all nature, life is grouped on planes and in series with specific limits. The earthly life is one series and the spiritual life begins a new series whose limits the Bible does not reveal. That the soul after death renews its earthly friendships is not necessarily contrary to Biblical teachings; it is something that we assume to be true from what the Bible does teach. The essence of Christianity is fellowship in love, and it seems improbable that our earthly friendships should end at the grave; but the higher spiritual fellowships may be something very different from earthly friendships.

"In the Old Testament there is almost no reference to a conscious life after death; the one notable exception being the verse in Job, '*though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh*

will I see God.' And that is seeing God, not friends.

The teachings of the New Testament are very conflicting because the writers have tried to weave together three very different teachings, namely, the old Hebrew eschatological belief in a Jehovah-God, who is Creator, Ruler and Judge of all nations and people, with especial love for His chosen people, Israel; who punishes whom He will and has mercy on whom He will; who in the fullness of time will send His Messiah to establish Israel above the nations and to rule in righteousness and judgment; who at a final Day of Judgment will judge all men, the righteous to go into life everlasting and the evil to the eternal punishments of hell.

"The second group of teachings was the Greek philosophic thought with which Jewish Christians and especially John and Paul came in contact as soon as they crossed the borders of Palestine. This teaching, largely Platonic, is found in the John Gospel and Letters and in the writings of Paul. It is more philosophic, and teaches doctrines of the Logos, the Holy Spirit, the trinitarian idea of Divinity with the identification of Jesus with the Logos; the two conflicting natures of man, carnal and spiritual, and the final unification of the spiritual with the Divine.

"The third group of teachings is the actual teaching of Jesus, which because of its character-

istic hopefulness and kindness, in marked contrast with the prevailing fear of Jewish thoughts about sin and eternal punishment, was called the Good News. Jesus' teachings group themselves around three concepts: First, the independent cosmic reality of a spiritual life in an immaterial realm of spirit, whose characteristic law is the Law of Love. This He called the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven. Secondly, He taught that God in His relation to humanity was as a Heavenly Father who loved His creation and purposed their salvation. This He did, not by judging or over-ruling their will, nor punishing their sin, but by immanent compassion and patience helping them to bear the natural consequences of sin and leading them into a better life of love. Third, Jesus taught that the only way of life and salvation was to trust, and follow under every circumstance, this spiritual Law of Love.

"It is very difficult in the writings of the New Testament to disentangle these three threads; but if we are to secure a consistent philosophy of life based on the teachings of Jesus, these Hebrew eschatological presuppositions and involved trinitarian theistic theories must be excluded. This done we find that Jesus taught that above all, and in all, the Law of Love is Supreme; that even the nature of God is characterized by Love. He *is* Heavenly Father, He is *Love* Personified.

Jesus taught that when Love is cherished, simply and fully, by the human soul, Love gives birth to a new life of Spirit. In His talk with Nicodemus, He said, '*Ye must be born again*,' and then He explains that it is a birth into a different and higher life process of spirit. '*That which is born of flesh, is flesh, that which is born of Spirit, is spirit.*' He says nothing as to the relation of individuals and the renewals of earth's friendships in that higher life of Spirit, but continually refers to its eternity and unitive-life character with Himself in the Father. Before His death he told His disciples, '*In my Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you, . . . that where I am there you may be also.*'

"It is often hard to distinguish in the Gospels exactly what Jesus taught concerning the fate of those dying impenitent. It is doubtful if He ever taught eternal punishment. He did emphasize the *consequences* of sin, but not its punishment; He taught that God was not a judge but a Heavenly Father whose love never failed. The verses in the Gospels to the contrary are probably inferences drawn by the writers from the almost universal belief of the day, but which His teachings really opposed. Jesus certainly placed the emphasis in His teachings on a promise, to those who would follow His Way of Love, of a more abundant life that would be eternal.

'*Because you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto Me. . . . Come you blessed of my Father . . . (enter) into life eternal.*' '*He that heareth my words and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life . . . and is passed from death into life.*' '*That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us.*'

"John taught that the future life of the redeemed was to be a unitive life with the life of the Christ, but he affirms a new and different test for survival, namely, belief in the Divine Sonship of Jesus. Paul places the emphasis on the reality of a spiritual life and the necessity of faith in the Christ as a ground for salvation. He writes, '*The gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*' '*If we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with Him.*' '*The law of the Spirit of Life has made us free from the law of sin and death.*' Paul refers to the nature of this new life of spirit. '*How are the dead raised up? . . . It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. . . . As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall bear the image of the heavenly. . . . This mortal must put on immortality.*' '*Therefore if a man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature; old things have passed away, behold all things have become new.*' '*For ye are dead and your lives are hid with Christ in God. . . . Then shall ye appear with Him in glory.*' Thus we see that Paul says

nothing about the renewal of earth's friendships in the spiritual life and nothing about its nature except that it is to be transcendent and distinctive, a life hid with Christ in God. As a ground for this unitive life of the spirit, there must be faith, but *'faith that worketh by love.' 'For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' 'Be ye, therefore, followers of God as dear children, and walk in love.'*

"So you see, Grace, that the Biblical teaching of the life of the soul after death is confined to the assertion of the fact, and not to a description of its precise nature except, in a general way, that it is to transcend this life and to be unitive with the risen life of Christ. Salvation is thus the emergence of a new type of life that is capable of living eternally under the conditions of spirit. And, after all, the thing that makes one's hope of reunion with departed friends alluring is to see in them and have them see in us the beauty and perfectness of the ideal Self. It is personality glorified by its immortality that we long to see and to have fellowship with; and this is possible only as we become unified in the Divine Perfectness. Is this not so, Grace?"

"Yes, I think so," said Grace, "but it leaves very indefinite whether we shall see, or shall not see, any particular face, does it not?"

"Yes, it does; but we can trust His love to do

more for us than we can ask or think. *'We shall be satisfied, when we awake in His likeness.'*"

The Rector continued, "At heart the deepest metaphysics of Buddhism, Platonism, and Christianity are amazingly alike. There is the same Unoriginate One that is known only by the inherent goodness, beauty and truth of His Self-expression. There is the same incarnation of the Divine attributes of Love and Mercy for the redemption of the world; the same trinity of spirit, spiritual-life and spirit-in-gracious-activity for the redemption of the world; the same conceptions and ideals of love, faith, truth, beauty, goodness, mercy, and compassion; the same universal and eternal process of spiritual becoming.

"The Buddhists see life as a process of spiritual becoming with the emphasis on the peace and rest that is to be found in the Pure Land of Moral Excellence, that is, Nirvana. Buddhist monks, all unruffled by their former clamant desires of the flesh, in serene meditation seek to attain their Nirvana.

"The Platonist sees life as a process of spiritual becoming with the goal, participation in the Perfect Wisdom of the One as Truth. Platonic philosophers, all undisturbed by the turmoil of earth's strife and greed, in serene search and contemplation of truth, seek to cast off the entanglements and impurity of the lower nature

to enter into the Beauty and Freedom of Spirit that is Yonder.

"But in the conception of a spiritual fellowship in Love of the soul with the Heavenly Father, as the goal of spiritual becoming, Christianity reveals its highest distinction. The Christian disciple, in obedience of will, in service to his neighbor, and faith in his Savior, seeks to enter into this Joy of Fellowship with the Father."

David said quietly, "*Namu Amita Butsu:* I adore Thee, Lord of Boundless Light and Life and Love."

The Rector said softly, "*Om mani padme hun:* Oh Thou Jewel of Truth at the Heart of the Lotus!"

Grace lifted her eyes, troubled and pleading, to the Rector. He rose and with lifted hand said reverently, "*In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*"

CHAPTER TWELVE

The next day a steady rain set in. They had planned a lunch on the ledge but adjourned to the house, and after supper, as they sat about the fireplace, their feelings reflected the drizzle outside. The Rector was the first to excuse himself, saying that he wanted to put in a good evening of work. The Professor asked David if he would join him at a game of chess, and they went over to his cabin to be undisturbed. Ailene was sewing and Grace was trying to fix her mind on a magazine. After a time Grace became restless, laid down the magazine to look out of the window, and then said she was not feeling very well and would retire. Ailene let the sewing fall in her lap and looked at the fire for a time. Then she went into Grace's room, and sitting on the bed, said, "Grace, dear, what is the matter? Both you and David all day have been unlike your usually cheerful selves. Tell me what it is."

"Why there is nothing the matter—not really; it must be the weather."

"But Grace, I feel sure something is wrong. Please tell me. Was it what you saw yesterday: the Rector holding my hand? Let me tell you about it. We had been discussing a chapter of his book, and I had criticised it as being un-

necessarily argumentative and involved. I told him that it reminded me of a story of Abraham Lincoln. One of his generals had come to tell him of his elaborate plans for a coming campaign. After he had talked for an hour of involved technicalities, Lincoln said, 'General, I have not understood all you have said, but I think that I get your idea: you are going to try and hold the enemy, while Phil Sheridan skins him alive.' This set the Rector to laughing and he said it reminded him of another story, about two negro washerwomen. One said, 'The ol' massa done say dis shirt won't fade, but I's gwine show him 'twill.' As he told the story he leaned over and laid his hand on mine. That was what you saw. I'm sorry it troubled you."

After that they had a good talk. Grace was all discouraged and disheartened, because the summer was nearly over and the Rector appeared to be as indifferent to her as ever. Ailene asked her if she was doing anything to attract him? Grace raised her eyebrows questioningly, "Why, the idea. I've been scrupulously careful to do nothing that would give him the slightest reason for thinking me improper or forward."

Ailene asked her if she did not think that God gave girls their personal beauty and charm for the purpose of attracting mates, as well as for holding them? She suggested that Grace be less restrained in her attitude toward him, and let

herself act more naturally, as her instincts prompted her under the circumstances. "Why not wear in the evening some of your prettier, more feminine dresses? And when you are alone with him, did you ever try touching him? Did you ever read Rhoda Dunn's beautiful verse?

'The summer night was soft upon the land;
Dim shadows of the hills outlined the sky;
And from the wood a dove's unanswered cry
Uprose against Orion's shining band.

We walked in silence but each other scanned
With friendly thought and sympathetic eye;
Until, a rougher place to help me by,
I felt upon mine own thy stronger hand.

Was it the magic of the night on me?
The open fields? The quiet stars above?
That strangeness of the solitude with thee?
Or that far calling of the mating dove?
Or was it from the first ordained to be
That friendship at a touch should change to love.'"

Grace flushed and said that it didn't seem as though she could act differently with him, she admired him so much. "Perhaps she could—if Ailene thought *best*—perhaps she *could* dress a little different, especially in the evenings." Ailene said nothing more, and Grace appeared to be considering. When Ailene went to her own room,

Grace was feeling much better, and a tender smile trembled on her lips as she dropped off to sleep.

The next day as David and the Rector were walking about the pond, the Rector said, "David, when you began your statement about the nature of God, it seemed to me that you were headed far away from any 'personal' idea, but you ended with a statement that was splendid. I am very jealous for the good Name of my Lord and I welcomed it. To me He is most Personal, but I think that you are right in warning against any use of the 'personal' idea that will make of God a man-like being. To me, the mystical conception of the Lord as the soul's Beloved is most inspiring and satisfying. For many years I have subordinated everything else to that, that I may be loyal to Him."

The Rector evidently expected that David would approve of this and sympathize with him, so he was quite taken aback when David frankly doubted the wisdom of such a renunciation of man's natural love for a woman. David said that he did not think that a mystical love for one's Lord and an earthly love for one's mate were at all incompatible. Sex-love ought not to be looked upon as unworthy, as something that ought to be suppressed as being prejudicial to a higher love for God. On the contrary, he thought they were both necessary to the highest

development of a normal life. Sex-love is universally present in nature and in man it becomes a stepping stone to a higher spiritual experience that can be secured sanely and normally in no other way. In fact, it is only through the symbolism of the sex-union that the soul gets its idea of a higher union of spirit with Spirit, and much less is able to enter into its higher experience. By your rejection of a sex-mate and the exaltation of your selfish idealism, you not only impugn the most conspicuous thing there is in all nature, but you inhibit the very end you most desire; in addition you deny the natural possibility of that higher experience to some equally desirous girl with whom you might secure it and share it."

"Well, David," said the Rector, "you certainly have spoken frankly, but it hurts to have one's highest and most sacred ideals thus challenged. Do you mind if I walk on alone?"

David started to explain and to apologize, but the Rector walked rapidly away and left him unhappy and disturbed—for David loved the Rector and dreaded the loss of his friendship. With a heavy heart David went back to camp. By rare good fortune he met Ailene near the brook, reading, and with immense relief he told her what he had said and asked for advice. She did not reply at once but he saw a curious smile begin to quiver about her lips. When she lifted

her eyes (those calm, steady, sympathetic eyes), they were almost laughing as she said, "Do you know, David, I think you said just the right thing. He is too good a man to limit his usefulness by any such quixotic vow. But let me tell you of a talk I had with Grace. Last night she seemed so worried and out of sorts that I went into her room and we had a good talk. In the course of it she referred to the Rector's lack of interest in her, and I advised her to take more initiative in attracting him. At first she seemed horrified at the thought of it, but later I could see that she was considering it. That is why I smiled at your sage advice to the Rector. We are certainly fellow conspirators."

David's reply had nothing especially to do with either the Rector or Grace. He said, "Ailene, I think you ought to take more initiative, also."

Ailene laughed very contentedly, "No, David, I have all I can do to keep you at a proper distance until Grace is made happy, or until—— until nearer the end of the summer." Ailene's face took on a Mona Lisa smile, and David went off whistling.

A few days later, Ailene had finished some work which she and the Rector had been doing, when he said, "Ailene, I want your judgment on a matter. A few days ago David and I had a talk which at first upset me a good deal, but is

slowly convincing me that he was right. To make the situation clear, I must refer to my inmost consecration and ideals; I want you to bear with me. When I was consecrated to the priesthood I determined to remain unmarried, believing that it would enable me to devote my time and thought more exclusively to His service. This determination was of the nature of a mystical vow to my Lord. This talk of David's, however, has shattered my confidence that it was a wise or noble thing to do. I am gradually coming to see that the very opposite course may be wiser. It is about this, Ailene, that I wanted to speak." As he finished his hand, which had been resting on the table, impulsively reached out toward her.

Ailene replied, "Of course, Mr. Fullerton, I would not presume to advise you in so personal a thing as your religious vows; that is something for you alone to consider and decide. On the general question as to the wisdom of the ascetic and celibate life, I would have to side with David, as I understand his feeling about it. There are two things against celibacy that seem to me incontrovertible. It is contrary to the whole trend of nature. It might be claimed that the mystic saints are of such exceptional genius that they are excused from, or are above, the general law. But what proof is there of this, that this type of life has any biologic or evolu-

tionary value? Are we sure that the race would be benefited by any considerable number of men becoming celibate mystics? The second reason against it is, it denies to man one of the most important aids to character formation and the conservation of those gains, namely, the advantage of sharing cooperatively in the responsibilities and the self-giving labor of family life, with all its incidental discipline and blessing. To me, married life is one of unspeakable opportunity and happiness; at least it is capable of being so, and its very normality is its own best defense."

The Rector replied, "Thank you, Ailene, you have helped me. And now I want to ask your further help. David's talk has led me to think of marriage and that thinking has led me straight to you. I think that I ought to select some one who would be a help in my ministry. For some years I have noted your good sense and ability, which our experience this summer has quickened into admiration and regard. Will you marry me, Ailene?"

As he had been speaking Ailene's eyes had been resting frankly on his, but when he finished speaking they wandered over the pond and the hills beyond, to the fleecy clouds moving serenely above. When her eyes returned she smiled in a friendly way and placed her hand in his outstretched palm. She said, "Rector, this chapter

needs further consideration. It is neither inspired, nor well thought out; you ought to get clearer in mind the differences between a parish helper, an efficient wife and mother, and a dear comrade for the spiritual quest."

The Rector's face was a study in its changing expressions, but a frank, cordial smile followed, as he said, "Ailene, you are a wonder. I *will* reconsider the chapter as you suggest, but some time I would like to talk further with you about it; perhaps next fall in the city. Meanwhile I wish you would give me your ideas of an ideal marriage; I can see that I need your vision."

"Well, Rector, as I have just said, marriage to me seems to be an absolute necessity if man or woman is to come to an understanding of life's full meaning and possibilities. A woman needs a man's thoughtful, courageous faith, his resources of mind and energy, his care and protection, and above all she needs his urgent desire to awaken the hidden springs of her own nature, that are often buried so deep that she is almost unconscious of them; and when they are awakened she needs him far more to satisfy her longings and bring her, her heart's desire.

"A man needs a woman's practical devotion to provide for him the home surroundings and atmosphere that he needs for his best work. He needs her love and sympathy to bear with his more clamant desires and to satisfy his ever

recurring hunger. He needs above all her sensitive reaction to the spiritual values of beauty and love and faith, so as to be a guide and consolation to him on the spiritual quest. Neither can win it with entire satisfaction alone; to be supremely successful and abidingly happy and content, each needs the other. And, '*She for joy will follow, where he for love will lead.*'

"Marriage at its best is a melodious harmony. There is the pragmatic chord: a companionship of congenial temperaments, community of ideas and ideals, mutual thoughtfulness for each other's welfare and happiness, a willing cooperation in the team play of labor and self-denial. A second chord is the natural sex hunger, whose end is reproduction, and a suitable environment for the care and nurture of children. Nature apparently cares very little for happiness and worldly success, so long as reproduction is safeguarded. To this end nature uses man's insistent physical desires and woman's natural craving for children and a home and protection, to lure them on to marriage, and, unless these physical facts are recognized and satisfied, the harmony is lost in a jangle of discord.

"Then there is a third chord in marriage that is far too often unrecognized or ignored. There is a spiritual end in marriage that exceeds in importance both the pragmatic and physical, that adds to its music an overtone of heavenly

melody. The Heavenly Father has tied in with sex-hunger to accomplish a necessary physical task, a nobler desire for companionship of spirit. This spiritual end of marriage calls for far more love and tenderness and skill and patience. The dear sweet intimacies of soul-love, whose climax is the merging of two souls into a single spirit, is the portal to a higher unified life of inexpressible joy. In this spiritual union there is brought to birth a transcending life of spirit with its surpassing vision, abounding freedom, and exquisite delight. It releases and transforms spiritual energy so that it becomes available for the otherwise exhausting and impossible task of life; it is the source of creative art and illuminating inspiration. It brings a new sensitiveness to beauty that lifts one's eyes from the shabby things of earth to see the beauties and raptures of heaven. Instead of carrying with it a taint of shame and evil, as though yielding to sex-desire was a yielding to a carnal nature, it is in reality the noblest, the most beautiful, the most spiritual achievement of which the human soul is capable. It is in this soul-companionship on its adventure toward a higher life of spirit, where all sex differentiations are merged into a more perfect synthesis, that marriage has its highest significance and promise."

"Well, Ailene, you have made my calculating proposal of a few moments ago look pretty

cheap and shabby. But you have made its object very much more beautiful and worth while. May I ask again some time?"

"No, Rector. Love is of God, and when true love calls, its voice will be recognized and it will speak with authority. Shall I come tomorrow for some more typing? I like the work." With that Ailene started to go, but she turned to say to the Rector, "May I make a suggestion? Do you appreciate what a perfectly lovely woman, Grace is?"

The Rector replied, "It has seemed to me that of late Grace and David were becoming very good friends."

"Oh, Rector, you are a very poor observer. They are good comrades and are very happy together, but there is a side of Grace that she is not showing David, and a side of David that he is not showing her. You have known Miss Vanester in the city for many years, but you have hardly begun to know the real Grace. Why don't you go with her on one of her walks and get acquainted? I suspect that she would like to have you."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The end of the interesting summer was fast approaching. Professor and Mrs. Santon had already left, and the Rector felt that another week must find him back in the city. One evening Ailene said that she wanted Mr. Fullerton to see the view from a certain hill-top about two miles from camp and suggested that Grace and David show him the way the following day. The Rector said that he would be glad to go if they could delay starting until the middle of the afternoon. David excused himself as he was obliged to be away. Grace asked if Ailene could not go with them, but she had promised David's aunt to help her can fruit. The Rector suggested that they go alone, which was very unusual, for he had been careful all summer not to be paired off, but Grace accepted the suggestion with pleasure.

When the time for starting arrived she appeared in a very youthful and attractive costume, and the Rector joined her, looking particularly virile and well set up in a rough tweed suit. They started off in high spirits; along the highway they chatted on about the topics of the day, and the activities of the church to which they were so soon to return. When they reached a point on the highway about a

half mile from where the regular path turned off, Grace suggested that they make a bee line for the summit, as it looked so much nearer. The Rector was willing and in great glee they started through the woods. As the way became more rough, the Rector became more jolly and youthful, and at a particularly bad place he took her hand to help her over; the remembrance of what Ailene had said about the magical power of touch, flashed into her mind, and she instinctively gave his fingers a friendly pressure. A little bit surprised, he glanced at her, and, while she avoided his eyes, she could not quite conceal her feelings. He held her hand a little more firmly and quite forgot to release it when they were over the bad place. At one spot she nearly lost her balance; the Rector saved her, but in his turn stumbled and fell flat. Grace sat down, laughing, "Excuse me, Mr. Fullerton, but you did look funny; I never saw you before in such an undignified pose."

He was laughing, too, and said, "Grace, I don't think that 'Mr. Fullerton' sounds in keeping with present circumstances; I wish that you would drop it and call me Frank. We are evidently out for adventure and we had better take advantage of it and be friendly."

As he took her hand to help her rise and noticed her cheeks flushed by exertion and merriment, he was thrilled by her youthful and

attractive appearance. He said, instinctively, "Why Grace, how sweet you look; I never saw you more charming in your most elaborate reception gown."

She courtesied, "And you, Frank, were never more athletic and handsome."

And so they went on laughing and joking as neither had done for years; it was a relief for him to get away from the millinery and conventions of the "cloth," and in the play he seemed to throw off years of formality and pride of culture and position; and she became less the sophisticated lady of society and more the simple affectionate girl that she was at heart. They came to a dense grove of young hemlock trees and, as there did not seem to be any short way around, they went right into it. He held back the branches as much as he could and she following shielded her face with arms and hands. When they emerged, he had a torn shirt sleeve and a scratch on his cheek, while one or two buttons of her blouse had become unbuttoned and her abundant wavy hair was all loose about her shoulders. She laughed a little nervously as she caught sight of him and gathered up her flying hair. He frankly stared at her and, as she dropped on a log for a moment's rest, he knelt at her side and said, "What beautiful hair you have, Grace; I never imagined it was so wavy."

When she saw how naturally he accepted the

situation, she became more at ease herself and let her fingers spread out the strands of hair. "Yes, it is beautiful; I always hate to hide it, as fashion demands. I am glad that you like it." She noticed that he was greatly stirred by the sight of it, but was not prepared for his words, which tumbled out impulsively as a boy would speak: "Grace, may I—may I touch it?"

"Surely," she replied with sparkling eyes and breath coming a trifle fast. He slowly and almost reverently leaned forward, taking some of the strands in his hands, and then leaning still farther forward, pressed his lips to them. He said never a word and remained almost motionless for a moment. As he did not stir she raised her eyes which had been downcast and saw his eyes fixed on the curving beauty of her bosom. In the excitement of the moment she had forgotten her open blouse, but instantly tried to draw it together and rebutton it.

Suddenly the Rector sprang to his feet, a set look on his face, and said briskly, "I think we had better be moving, if we expect to have lunch on the hill and be back before dusk."

He led the way, talking rather hurriedly about anything that came to his mind. Poor Grace was completely upset; she thought, "Why need he have taken it so seriously?" They came to a precipitous ledge and the hill rose steeply above; they looked to the right and left for an easy place

to climb but none appeared. The Rector said, "I think, Grace, if you step on my hand I can lift you so that you can reach that bush and draw yourself up, then you can reach me your hand and I can make it." With this mutual help they went upward. The hill was steep and after a little, Grace said, "Here is a big tree, let us rest against the upper side and catch our breath." There wasn't much room, but the Rector rested against the tree and Grace partly against the tree and partly against him. It was a little awkward and, to make it easier and safer, the Rector placed his arm about her. He said, "Excuse me, Grace, but it is almost necessary." She tried to draw away a little but almost lost her footing, and his arm tightened. She tried to feel displeased but it was a failure; it was undeniably agreeable to trust to his strength and feel safe. The silence became a trifle noticeable and she felt that they ought to be starting again, but then it was rather nice where they were and it was safe, too. She felt him move and looked up over her shoulder. Suddenly he leaned over and kissed her. She exclaimed, "Oh, Frank, why did you do that?"

He replied, passionately, "I couldn't help it, Grace. It was the Frank in me getting the better of the Rector. Did I do very wrong?"

Grace could not get away—even if she wanted to; but what could she say? She looked up at

him, intending in her thoughts to rebuke him, but her eyes reflected her heart's throbbing rather than her thought's intent. He leaned over again, but gently she raised her hand and checked him. She said, and there was a catch in her voice, "I did not mind the first because it was Frank; but we must consider the Rector. Let us be going."

They clambered up the steep hill, holding hands and bushes, and with easier going the Rector-side came to control again. When they reached the top they admired the wonderful view, the massing of the afternoon clouds, which the setting sun was touching with rays of splendor. The Rector recalled that David had said that, no matter how grey and forbidding the clouds, if there was a clear strip of blue next the horizon, there would be no immediate storm, and he pointed out the strip of blue to her. She arranged the lunch and they talked more easily, the Rector revealing himself at his best, the side that Grace had always admired in the past. He referred to his ideals in the ministry and said, "Tell me, Grace, what you have liked best in my ministry?" She replied, "I can not really say. I have always admired you tremendously and never thought to analyze it."

He urged, "But surely some part must have pleased you particularly. Tell me, it would give me pleasure and encouragement to know." The

Rector had ever been her ideal, but respect for him as Rector had only partly covered her secret love for him as a man. She recalled the many times she had received the Eucharist from his hands; the tones of his voice were indelibly printed on her memory, "*The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for you, preserve thy body and soul into everlasting life.*" She tried to tell him this, and he was greatly touched; but in her heart of hearts she was thinking of the secret thrill that had always come to her when his fingers touched her hand in the service, and she knew that in her devotion, her worship of the Lord was strangely mingled with loving prayers for the Rector.

As they were making their way homeward, they continued talking, the Rector speaking in his usual interesting and instructive way. The Rector-side was evidently determined to hold control of the situation the rest of the way homeward. She thought, "When the Frank-side likes me so well, why need the Rector-side be so willful and stubborn?" She was puzzled and tired after the rough climb and her heart was very heavy; she wished that she had worn her usual suit and had been more restrained. She wanted most of all—at least she thought she wanted—to blot out the whole day as having brought an end to her foolish hope. It was a dreary walk homeward; she knew that he felt it as much as

she did, and she tried to hide her own disappointment and weariness in a desire, which was perfectly natural to her, to make it less hard for him. But as they drew near the familiar Pond Woods she found it harder and harder to control her feelings. It was bitterly hard to give up her dream of years, but she felt that now it must be done. Her poor tired body and mind were in deepest misery and the tears would come. Under the friendly shelter of the big pine trees she could restrain them no longer from trickling down her cheeks. The Rector happened to notice it. He stopped at once and said, "Why, Grace, you must be very tired." And then, with the blundering thought of a man trying to comfort a tired woman by making her laugh, he said, "You remind me of a little niece of mine who was naughty and her mother took away her doll. I found her in the front room, curled up in a big chair and crying. I asked her what was the matter, and her look I can never forget—one of utter pathetic sorrow—'She has taken away my dolly,' she said."

To his amazement Grace turned on him, her whole mother-nature aroused and indignant, "That is just what you are doing to me."

He was perfectly abashed for a moment and then he said "Come, Grace, there is a seat in this grove where we will not be interrupted. I know how tired you must be and how distressed,

but I must say something that I have tried very hard all the afternoon to put off saying. Come, I want to tell you now."

"Mr. Fullerton, I can't stand anything more today. You can see, I am almost used up. I am not even responsible for what I say. Please let us go back now. Perhaps, tomorrow."

But gently he led her to the seat and then, to her amazement, he dropped on the ground at her side and laid his head on her knee. As he said nothing, she looked at him curiously and then, in spite of herself, let her hand fall lightly on his head and caress his hair. She said, "Rector, Frank,—is it hard for you, also? Please don't mind me. I don't want to be a hindrance to your ministry. Forget me and cling to your ideals."

He did not raise his head but groped for her hand, and as he spoke she noticed a great relief in his voice. "Dear, I want first of all your forgiveness, and then I want to tell you all that is in my heart. I have desired to love for you a long time, but my selfish ideals have kept me from speaking. I was unwilling to have anything come into my life that I thought might detract from my ministry, not even you, dear. And I resented most of all marrying a rich girl, for that I feared would deaden my conscious dependence on Him for daily support. I must make a confession, also. Only a few days ago, I

proposed marriage to Ailene. It was the Rector-side that did it; I thought that she would make a more suitable minister's wife and be a greater help in the parish work, and that love need not enter in to detract from it. I prided myself on my devotion and thoughtfulness, but most fortunately Ailene's good sense noticed the absence of love and would have none of it. And then she revealed to me how beautiful and wonderful true love in marriage might be."

Still Grace said nothing. She feared that he might still be clinging to his vow; but neither did she want to disturb his present mood. After a time he said humbly, "If you care for my love, Grace, I can give it all to you now."

Then Grace leaned over and kissed his dear hands that were clasping hers, and as he raised his splendid head, she saw in his eyes the love she craved. He rose from the ground and sitting beside her drew her willing form to him. He said, "Is this the Rector's turn, or Frank's?" She said smilingly, "It was the Rector's turn, I think, but"—as she raised her lips to his, and there was a catch in her voice—she added, "I want to give Frank the first kiss, for I love him the best."

When she was free she said, "Dear, you need not worry about the money. My brother would be only too glad to take the house, and I am perfectly willing to go with you and live on your salary; that is, all except my clothes. I do love

pretty clothes and they cost an awful lot. Let me buy my dresses and all the rest of the bothersome money we can use in your charities. Oh, Frank, beloved, I have hungered for your love so long, so long! And this afternoon it seemed as though it was almost mine and then you changed. What made you change, Frank?"

"I want to explain, dear. Up to a few days ago I never had the shadow of a doubt but that my course, however difficult it might be to follow, was right. Then something that David said to me, and which I deeply resented at first, brought misgivings and that talk with Ailene convinced me that it was a mistake. I am almost ashamed to speak of what happened this afternoon when I changed so suddenly, I am afraid that you will think I am not good and pure at heart. When we came out of the hemlock thicket and I saw your glorious hair I could not resist kissing it. When I leaned over to kiss your hair,—you will not think less of me, Grace, if I tell you?—I saw something very beautiful. I did not intend to look, really I did not, but the branches had opened your blouse and I saw—and you—you looked so dear and lovely, that I wanted to hold you close in my arms. That overcame the last resistance to my will. I knew that never again could I be happy or content without your dear love. But the old restraint, the Rector-side, came back with a rush. I felt ashamed and

contemptible that the reasoned love for my Lord, of so many years standing, could be so easily and shamefully displaced. I instantly decided to do nothing more about it at this time, to be very careful the rest of the summer, and when I got back to the city to think it over prayerfully in my study; if I thought at that time as I then felt, to tell you formally of my love."

Grace breathed a sigh of relief as she listened to his confession. She said, "Frank, I am very glad that you have told me of your love to-day. If you had returned to the conventions and illusions of the city, the Rector-side might have yielded to their enchantment. I am sure the natural love of the Frank-side, under the sweet influence of these blessed trees, is more to be trusted. Come, dearest, let us go and tell Ailene and David."

As they drew near the bungalow, the Rector said, teasingly, "Is it the Rector's turn, or Frank's?"

She replied soberly, "It ought not to matter any more. Why should there be two of you, beloved? You must be careful, Frank, and never let the Rector-side gain control."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

When David returned, late in the afternoon, he stopped at the farm house to see his uncle and found Ailene just starting for the camp. Uncle asked David if he would go with him to the barns to help put a heavy timber into place under one of the sheds that he was repairing. As it was on the way to camp Ailene went with them. They first had to raise the corner of the shed to get more room for the timber; David threw all his splendid strength on the lever and uncle followed with a wedge to hold it in place. Then they placed bars under the timber and after considerable straining and effort worked it into place. Uncle went about his work and David and Ailene returned to camp.

Almost as soon as they were out of sight of the house, David noticed something unusual about Ailene. Perhaps it was the easy way she took his arm and let her fingers find and hold his hand. He looked at her and met her eyes, a little unsteady for the first time, looking up at him and smiling. "What is it, Ailene? There are two or three days before the year is up; can it be that you are going to relent before the very last minute is gone?"

She replied, "No, it is not that; at least I

don't think it is, but I am worried about Grace and the Rector. Today is going to fulfill or end her hopes, at least for the present; I feel sure of that. After they were gone I felt like singing at my work, I felt so happy and confident; later on I felt a horrid sinking feeling as though something had gone wrong. I feel so helpless; I feel —I feel just like praying. I think that was why I was so glad to see you; you are so strong and reliable."

They had come into the shade of the woods and the calm and confidence that always came in their presence, stole over them. Unrebuked this time, David put his arm about her and said, "Let us pray, Ailene. *God bless Grace and Frank and give them their heart's desire. Let no false idea or disharmony come in to destroy their faith in Love. Oh Thou who art Love, care for thine own!*"

As David looked down at Ailene he saw tears in her eyes, but more than that he saw an unmistakable love-light shining through the tears. She said simply, "David, you are so wonderful. My faith is weak and you are so good and true and comfortable. I need your love, David."

"Will you marry me soon, Ailene?"

"Yes, David."

Their lips met in tender betrothal and hand in hand they went toward the bungalow. Ailene said, "How strong and splendid you were at the

barn with uncle. It thrills me to see a man really exert his strength. It gives me a delicious feeling. Ever since I can remember, I have always admired big strong men.

Suddenly Ailene said, "David, I believe it is all right with Grace after all. I have a very different feeling now; and they are late, that is a good sign. Let us go in and get some supper ready, they will be coming soon."

Time passed and the twilight fell softly. They were expecting the return of Grace and the Rector, but thought that they would hear them coming, so they were taken quite by surprise to have them walk in hand in hand. But the Rector and Grace were just as surprised, for seeing no signs of anyone about they had come upon them unwittingly. The two men looked at each other a little foolishly. Ailene was the least disturbed in spite of her openly affectionate position with David, but it was Grace who first spoke. "Ailene, what does this mean? Are you engaged? You never hinted at such a thing. Was that why you did not want to go with us?"

"And you, Grace, you are holding the Rector's hand?"

This set them all laughing and it took but a few moments to tell of each engagement. Ailene asked about their plans. The Rector replied that they had hardly had time to make plans, but his thought was, if Grace was willing, that

they return to the city at once and plan for an early wedding. Ailene disapproved of this. She said there would be no end of talk among the busybodies of the church and the Rector's good name would suffer. Imagine, she said, it getting into the papers that the Rector was off all summer in the country with one of his fair parishioners and coming back for an early marriage. It would never do. "If I were you, Grace, I would accept your brother's invitation to visit them at his cottage on the North Shore. Then, when you return to the city, you can speak of your summer at the shore and no one will be the wiser. I would suggest that at first you and the Rector ignore each other then gradually you can be seen together; about Thanksgiving you can announce the engagement and be married as soon after as you please."

The Rector approved of this and said that he would get away the next afternoon. "How about that book of yours?" David asked. "I thought you needed a week more to finish it."

The Rector laughed and said, "David, you have totally upset my old ideas and Grace has given me a lot of new ones. I think the book will have to be scrapped."

"You mustn't throw it away, Frank, it can not be all wrong," said Grace.

"I am afraid that it is fundamentally wrong. I would have to begin all over again anyway,

but that is unimportant because the study in preparation is worth more than the book. How about supper, Ailene?"

David said, "Rector, Ailene and I would like to have you marry us tomorrow morning before you go; if you will do us the honor."

"Why, David Lisle, you haven't asked me yet, I must have a little time to get things ready."

"I know, Ailene, it is rather sudden but it is our only chance to have the Rector for some time to come."

"Well, I do want the Rector to marry us and I want Grace to be present, but it is so sudden it takes my breath away."

And thus it came to pass. In twenty-four hours, Ailene and David were married, the Rector had returned to the city, and Grace was on her way to her brother's cottage.

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During the days and weeks that followed, time for David and Ailene sped by on golden wings. Gradually she led him more and more to the farm and tried to get him interested in it. It came to a climax one day after his uncle had been talking with David about his health and his desire to be relieved of all care of the big farm. When David told Ailene about this she suggested that they take time the next day to go over the farm together and talk about it. After they had completed the round, David was

doubtful of the advisability of making the necessary effort and expense to work the farm as it ought to be worked. He thought that the position and associations at the University and Museum would be more profitable and interesting. He suggested selling the farm, with the exception of the Pond Woods, but Ailene was of an entirely different mind. She loved the big farm and she knew that he loved the woods; she dreaded the feverish, distracting life of the great city. The plan she urged, with all her strength, was for them to live on the estate the year around; to work the farm as a matter of duty, duty to do their part toward feeding the multitudes of people in the crowded cities, in the factories, the railroads, the mines. To David such a course meant monotonous, distasteful drudgery; to Ailene it meant freedom and happy days of out-of-doors productive labor.

She reminded David of his frequently-voiced philosophy of life, that called for simple things, for useful labor, leisure for reading and study, fellowship with the things they loved, and freedom from the jangle and irritation of the crowds. She urged that, right here on the farm, this ideal life could be lived. But still David hesitated; he recalled the disagreeable things of a farmer's life, the hard work, long hours, filthy barn chores, broken fences and straying cattle, disappointing harvests, and the necessary bar-

gaining for the sale of the produce. Suddenly Ailene said, "I have such a good idea. Let us send for my brother John, up in Maine; he is a splendid farmer, steady, industrious, painstaking. His wife is fine, too, you will like her; she was my best girl friend. Let me ask him to come and look after the farm; then you need think only of the woodlots and the timber; you will like that." This plan pleased David, for at heart he wanted to keep the farm and liked to see it in good cultivation, but dreaded the personal attention that would be required to do it.

Ailene immediately wrote to her brother and received a favorable reply; the home farm could be left to the younger brother; he would come before winter. Ailene was perfectly delighted and, to tell the truth, David was more so than he cared to admit. He was soon busy planning the things that needed to be done in developing the wood lots. There must be a sawmill down where the outlet from the pond crossed the highway; there were wood roads to be decided upon and constructed; men to be hired, and a little green-house where he could raise his own seedlings. Ailene smiled happily as she saw him becoming interested; the future was full of promise; she was content.

One day in November David had been working with his men in the woodlot, clearing a road. At his invitation Ailene had come over to see a

particularly big tree felled. David took his turn at the crosscut saw for the final cut; the saw bound—the tree was cramping at a wrong angle—there were wedges to be quickly driven. Now the saw was free again; with all their strength it was driven back and forth; the workman, watching the top, shouted, they sprang clear to watch it fall. At first only an almost imperceptible tremble, then very slowly and silently, gradually increasing to a roar, the giant crashed to the earth with great limbs crushed and shivered to bits in the tremendous shock.

They returned by the bungalow to see the twilight steal over the trees and the pond. They seated themselves on a favorite bench where she could rest easily against him and feel his strong arm about her. Ailene had been a surprise to David of late. After the question of operating the farm had been settled, it seemed as though Ailene had lost much of her old confident managing ways and had become submissive and affectionate. David was teasing her about it as they sat together. At first she entered into the spirit of it, but later became quiet and seemed to be perfectly content to simply lean against him and listen to his chatter.

She said, "Do you know, David, I have been 'acting' for a long time, ever since I went to New York; now there is no more need for acting, I can just be my natural self, loving you and

letting you take care of me, and O, I am so happy! I would like to tell you of my life if you care to listen. My dreams began when I was a little girl; we had a very happy home and mother was a perfect dear; there were three of us children, two brothers and myself. Mother loved me very much and was very good to me; father was good, too, but he loved mother so dearly that he hardly noticed me. Father and mother were unlike many New England parents and did not hesitate to let us children see their affection for each other. Mother made a confidant of me and before I was fourteen she had told me about men and women and love and marriage. She and father were frank with the boys also, so that we grew up understanding, thinking everything of each other and not hiding our childish desires for lovers and early marriage.

"Mother died when I was seventeen and, as John had married my best girl friend, there was no real need of me at home. At that time love seemed very beautiful and natural; already I had begun to look at the boys with the thought that I wanted a real lover as soon as I could find the right one. But we lived in a small and scattered community and the local boys seemed rough and unattractive; I felt that I must go away to find my ideal boy. John sympathized with me and urged me to attend the State

Normal school, so that I could go away to find work. John helped me to do this, so that at twenty I was able to leave home. I had the foolish notion that the place to have the widest choice was where there were the most people, so I went to New York City. I joined the Rector's church which was near where I worked at first and when I was obliged to move to another part of the city I continued to attend his church. I never came to feel acquainted with many people for I was too far away to attend meetings except for morning worship; it was a very aristocratic church and I was only a school teacher.

"Through it all I cherished my ideals of love and marriage. At first I hungered desperately for the friendly companionship of young men, but it seemed as though the only ones I could meet were unattractive. Little by little I drew into myself and became reserved and guarded. For a time I attended the meetings of a noted New Thought teacher and read books about the new science of psycho-analysis. From these I learned the extreme importance of correct thinking and the avoidance of morbid and repressed desires. I determined, while still cherishing my ideals of love, to sublimate the physical desires as much as possible by idealizing my teaching. I was very well repaid for this by the greater pleasure and success that I found in the work. In an

experience that I had with a girl friend who got into serious trouble through an overwhelming desire for the company of young men, I tried to befriend other lonely girls, and that is how I became interested in Annie. You don't know how a great city sucks the life blood out of young people, especially working girls. It is so easy to go wrong thinking that no one will know and no one cares. To yield gradually to temptation is so easy, at first simply for the excitement, to kill time, to forget loneliness. The very sex-desire for beauty and companionship and affection, that God intended to lead to the highest and purest happiness, becomes a snare to the greatest sin and misery.

"But often there was another side, a brighter side. Some dear girl would find an equally fine young man as lonesome as herself, and then the joy they found, together facing the great adventure in faith and courage! There was a reason why I wanted you to wait a year. The reason was this: I was afraid with your wealth and your intellectual ability you would take me and life too much for granted and too lightly. I wanted you to feel that you must *exert* yourself, that you must win for *yourself* love and success and their rewards of joy, by your own exertion. The real reason I wanted you to leave the Museum and come here to the farm was because I knew that, if you remained in the city, I would

always have to be stronger than you, and I didn't want to be. It is the woman in me, I suppose, that wants her mate to be the stronger so that she can trust him and lean on his greater strength. To be a teacher is a noble and useful profession, but it tends to sedentary habits and soft living. I knew if you remained in the city that I would always need to be planning and urging you to effort. Inevitably, sooner or later, I would be the one to carry the responsibility, and I could not bear to take that position with you. You are big and strong, and capable of growing under the discipline of hard work. So I was very happy when you decided to live here, because I knew that now I could throw off all worry and care, and be natural and happy. Do you remember last week when you had the teams up in the wood lot getting that fallen tree out of the road? Just to see you straining with the other men and the great horses, your eyes alight, strength and mastery in every movement and shout,—I was never so proud and happy in all my life: you were my man!

"But there is another reason now why I am especially glad that you are so strong and reliable and splendid. David, would you like it to be a boy or a girl? Carefully, husband, careful, not so tight, I can't resist now. Yes, I

hope it will be a boy, too; a boy with your physique and wonderful mind."

"And your beautiful face, dear, and clear, understanding eyes, and your precious, affectionate heart."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Four months have passed. Grace and the Rector carried out their plan to be married soon after Thanksgiving, and in accordance with his wishes she left her residence to live with her husband and his mother. Their apartment was in one of the huge buildings on the upper West Side. It had only a limited number of rooms and they seemed very small after the large and airy rooms she had been accustomed to; but being small it had one advantage, she and her mother could easily do the work and avoid the presence and expense of a maid. The mother was very kind and considerate and staid a good deal in her own room, but Grace missed the convenience and the privacy of her old home.

The Rector had his library and study at the church, so that he was seldom at home during the day; in the evenings there were unending meetings, receptions, entertainments, and, as he had taken it for granted that she would prefer her own bedroom, they saw very little of each other. Like too many marriages in the city, theirs, to both the Rector and Grace, was a disappointment. Outwardly they were affectionate and thoughtful of each other, but of late misgivings had been creeping into the Rector's

mind as to whether he had done right to forsake his long cherished ideal of living singly for his Lord. Perhaps Grace, being the more affectionate of the two, suffered the more keenly, as she realized that their married life was coming to be more and more conventional and unloving.

On this particular night, immediately after dinner, they had dressed for an important reception in honor of a visiting English Bishop, that was to be held in one of the most exclusive residences of the city. The Rector never liked these functions and the preparation for them always irritated him. Grace remarked, "Frank, you must wear the jeweled cross that the Vestry gave you. You have not worn it very much and this is an occasion when its absence will be noted."

"I can not bear to wear it at these public receptions. It seems like sacrilege to wear the symbol of the cross on which our Saviour died as a bit of millinery and adornment, at so selfish and aristocratic a gathering."

"But Frank, this whole life of ours at Saint Stephen's is acting and artificial, but if you are to be successful as the Rector you must play the part. These people are good people, they do not intend to be insincere, but culture and convention and wealth and pride are so essentially a part of their life that unless you follow the rules of the game, you lose all influence and

usefulness. Come, Frank, that is a dear, please wear it."

"I do not want to be disagreeable, but I can not enter honestly and whole-heartedly into this play-acting. This continual artificiality and masquerade is blotting out all the vision and idealism and desire that we absorbed last summer in the woods with David and Ailene."

Grace came over to him and shyly smoothed his troubled brow. "Frank, do you feel that way? I feel it, too. Only the things that are eating my heart are the things of our own life right here. When I desired and dreamed of you in secret long ago, I thought only of the sweet companionship that would be ours. But the reality has been so different. I am never able to get that feeling of dear 'togetherness' that I dreamed of. You have your study in the church and at night you are away so much and out so late that many a night I cry myself to sleep from sheer loneliness. If we could be together more. Wouldn't you like it, dear? Wouldn't it make it easier to bear the irritating things of the day?

"Forgive me, Grace, if I have been neglectful of you. It seems of late as though there never was half time enough to attend to all the crowding affairs, but I thought that you would understand and make allowance. Why, Grace, you are crying; have I hurt you?"

"No, Frank, you are not to blame; it is just the whole hateful system that we are entangled in. In the years that now seem so long ago, I wanted a baby very, very much. You may think me silly and even wicked, but in those days the thought would flash into my mind, if it was a boy I wanted it to have your splendid head, and if it was a girl, to have my eyes and hair. It makes me cry to think that I must perhaps give up that hope—forever."

"Does it mean so much to you, dear? I never appreciated that. Aren't you afraid of the pain and the risk?"

"Yes, I think every woman realizes that, but oh, if it could come true, I would bear it all gladly. But, Frank, if it ever comes, you will be very tender and patient, won't you? You will not leave me to bear it alone, will you?"

"Grace, what a selfish fool I have been to waste all these precious years; and even now how little love and attention I am showing you. Even today I was—oh, I am so unworthy!"

"No, Frank dear, it isn't you that is to blame, it is our surroundings. So long as we remain in this place we must endure it. Dear, I know I am silly, but let me say it. If you would only love me more; not so hurriedly, take time for me to rest in it, time to come to the response that I want to give you but can not so quickly. You come into my room and kiss me good night, and

often before I am really awake you are gone, and I cry myself to sleep."

"Dear, I am just as unhappy as you are, but what can we do about it? The way seems all hedged in."

"Sometimes I wish that we could escape from it all. It seems at times an evil thing that is ruining our happiness. Can you not think of some way to escape? I wish that you had a country parish, or a professorship in some college."

"No, Grace, it must not be that, that would be a let-down, a sign of failure. If we change it must be to something harder, to something that will make me exert myself. When I was younger, one of the missionary bishops urged me to go with him to the North-west; sometimes I wish that I had gone."

"God has been very good to us, Frank, to bring you and to keep you here until we found each other. Let me kiss you, dear. It almost makes me cry to think how near we came to missing each other. O I am so glad, so glad! But *now*, there must be some way of escape. Let us think and pray about it; some way will open."

"There is one way, possibly. Today the Bishop referred to a call that has come from Rhode Island, for a clergyman to take a rather trying parish in a manufacturing city. Most of the

communicants are English workmen and their families. I recall that he mentioned a very attractive manse in connection with it. The salary is small, less than a third that I am receiving here, what would you think of going there?"

"Fine, Frank. The salary does not matter. Our expenses will be less, and I think you carry your scruples about living on my money too far, anyway. Let me pay for the table expense in addition to my clothes, come, that's a dear. I hope the place isn't filled yet."

"No, it will not be easy to find a suitable man for so difficult a place. Do you know, while the Bishop was talking, the thought flashed into my mind, 'that would be just the place I would like for myself.' Do you feel sure you wouldn't miss your society friends too much? I would be glad to go."

"I am so excited. Tell me about the manse; how many rooms has it? What is the neighborhood? Has it a flower garden? I hope there is a nice, sunny room for us."

"Another thing that may interest you, Grace. There is a large church school and no end of children. Perhaps a baby would not be so out of place in the Rector's family."

"Frank, we have totally forgotten the reception."

"Never mind, dear, there will be such a jam

present that we will not be missed. By the way, I wonder how mother is. I will tap on her door and tell her our plans."

In a minute he returned to say that his mother had retired and advised them to do the same if they were not going to the reception. "What do you say, dear, do you think it too early?"

"I will come to your room and we can talk a little more about it. I can almost feel myself there; I am sure we are going to be very happy. Oh Frank, you are so good at planning, I love you for it."

"Grace, you were never dearer to me than you are tonight. You have given me a new idea of Love: it is more beautiful, more real and ultimate. I used to think that God's Love was measured by His willingness to love sinful men; that He saw the misery and selfishness and failure, and sent His Son to a world of lost and sinful men to become their Savior. Tonight God's Love seems something far more wonderful and beautiful, and it is your patient self-abnegating love, your brave willingness to face pain and death to bear children for love's sake, that brings me the new vision of what preciousness He may see in us humans, weak as we are. I see now that it was in sheer loneliness that God created the world in order to have some one to love and someone to love Him. From

the beginning He saw that His Joy would be according to the measure of their response, and He sent the Holy Spirit of Love to bring the response to its perfectness. He is happy when He sees the beginnings of response in the blossoms and fragrance of flowers, the songs of birds, the tender love of parents and children, the rapturous love of betrothal; but He is *satisfied* only when the soul whom He specially loves returns Him love for Love."

"Oh, Rector, don't preach tonight; what I crave, tonight, is Frank's dear human love and tenderness. Come, dear."

"Grace, I haven't felt so much like a boy since that walk we took last summer. My, but your hair was lovely and your—"

"I am so glad that you have come back to life at last, Frank. Do you remember when we were balanced against the tree on the steep hillside, when you stole one kiss and wanted another, and I said we must consider the Rector; do you remember? Now I feel just the other way: the Rector has dominated you altogether too much of late. For my sake you must not let him do it; you must assert yourself, dear. Make the Rector remain at his study and you come home to me. It is *you*, Frank, that I love; and it is *you*, not the Rector, that is going to bring us wonderful visions, and success and delight. The Rector-side is accidental and arti-

ficial and transient; the Frank-side, that I love, is immortal and divine. Frank, I have so missed your dear human love."

As they were talking they had begun to undress; Grace had removed her outer garments and was standing before the mirror combing her wonderful wavy hair. She happened to notice in the glass the reflection of Frank looking at her with fascinated eyes. She turned her face toward him, her eyes luminous with love. With a spring he clasped her in his arms, his body pressed against her warm back, his hands clasping her soft yielding bosom, her dear face turned and lifted to his. Oh, the sweet familiar fragrance of her, the tickle of her hair on his cheek and neck. As he bent to kiss her she saw his glance fall; her whole soul was filled with a shy, sweet response. She turned quickly in his arms to hide a rosy face on his shoulder. "Frank, sweetheart, I am so glad you have come. Oh *Frank*, Frank dear, how sweet your love is to me."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Two years passed filled with unalloyed happiness for David and Ailene. John had come with his family to take charge of the farm, and brought the laughter and singing of children, the energy of industry, the satisfactions of agreeable companionships. Very quickly the effect was seen in the more animated appearance of the estate that had been forsaken for so long; the voices of hens and turkeys, lowing of cows, and neighing of horses once more made the place seem friendly and inviting. David with his men had been busy in the woods, clearing roads, felling trees, hauling logs; he had thoroughly enjoyed the work and great piles of logs were his visible reward. But better than all else was the beloved baby, precious above price! It was hard to tell which was the more exalted in their joy, David in his undisguised pride, or Ailene, whose early serene beauty had taken on a touch of maternal responsibility. And right it was that they should be exalted, for they had carried life to its natural term and had been rewarded by the commendation of unseen hosts. In them life's meaning and purpose had again been accomplished.

The Rector and Grace were settled in their new parish and were greatly enjoying the new

and different activities. Grace had organized a girls' club and one of their plans for the coming summer was to have a vacation camp for them. When David and Ailene heard of it they invited them to the Pond Woods and, on this particular day in the late spring, the Rector and Grace had come for a visit and to make arrangements for it.

After an early lunch upon the ledge they had returned to the bungalow and spent the evening about the open fire. During a lull in the conversation, Grace remarked that with all their discussions, two years before, they never had had the pleasure of listening to David explain what he thought about the soul and its destiny. Ailene gave him an encouraging pat and this is the substance of his talk.

"The human personality is made up of two parts, the material body and the immaterial mind. The physical body is a complex aggregation of atoms, cells, organs, faculties, brain and nervous system, each of which appears to have its own little mind. The human mind is the totality of these little minds plus an added something that is called the soul. The mind has three rather distinct areas: the subconscious area is made up of all the included little minds of atoms, cells, faculties, glands, etc. It reveals itself in the directive control of the automatic life processes; it is seen in the instincts, appetites and

passions; it reveals itself in instinctive behavior, in dreams, in phantasy, in obedience to hypnotism and suggestion, in habit and memory.

"The subconscious area, therefore, includes the larger part of the mind, but not its most significant part. If we had a list and description of all the included little minds we would have the specifications for that particular body, or its 'body-idea,' or karma. From it one could assemble a similar body, but could not give it unity and life, direction or focus, that is an activity of soul.

"The second area of the human mind is the conscious mind, or soul. This appears to be something added over and above the sum of the little included minds, that make of it a purposive unit. The words, soul and mind, are often used interchangeably, not because they mean exactly the same thing but because the visualizing is done by the conscious mind. Soul is the spiritual element that flows into body from the great ocean of Spirit, to fill its tiny bay and give it meaning and living personality. It is soul that gives 'form,' unity, life, harmonious inter-relations to what else would be a jumble of parts; and its essentially spiritual nature gives it no rest until the body unity joins in the universal process of becoming free and harmonious and beautiful.

'The common problem, yours, mine, every one's,
Is not to fancy what were fair in life,
But finding first what may be,
Then find how to make it fair
Up to our means.'

"The third area of mind is that obscure Superconsciousness of which we have a glimpse in what is often called, spiritual intuition. Body is a more or less static, material unity; soul is more fluid, but being bound-in with matter, it has a measure of particularity. But Spirit is free and can only be glimpsed by soul. Spirit is the Soul of the next more inclusive unity than the human unity. The 'body' that carries Spirit may be the material Universe or it may have a more ethereal body. There may be many of these astral bodies in an ascending series of spiritual freedom, but the freest and most inclusive will have, for its soul, the Mind of God. When we speak of the human spirit, we do not mean an entity, but we refer to that limited vision, or hint, that the soul gets of this next more inclusive Soul. Such a hint comes not through the senses but by an immediacy from being immersed in it and becoming aware of its identity. The Upanishads speak very often of this, '*That art thou.*' They speak of Brahma,

'His form is not to be beheld.
No one soever sees Him with the eye.
They who know Him with heart and mind
As abiding in the heart, become immortal.'

"John's Gospel says the same thing:

'Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.'

"The soul's awareness of this divine identity comes through some focused attention of both thought and desire. The most common awareness of this higher Soul is in the soul's enjoyment of goodness, beauty and truth. It comes as a glow with unselfish service; it comes in the enjoyment of affectionate fellowship with congenial and beloved friends. It was revealed in the miraculous gifts that accompanied the '*Koinonia*' of the early Christian fellowship.

It is more clearly experienced in the rare moments of intense religious and contemplative devotion when the whole soul is absorbed in love for the Divine One and enters for a moment to share the Beatific Vision. It is intimately experienced in those ecstatic moments when, in the emotion of pure love, the soul merges her focused desire with the equally focused desire of her sex-mate. Then the thought and desire of

two souls are so fused into one unified selfness that, in that higher unity, they participate in the wider freedom and more exquisite delight of a more inclusive and more spiritual existence. The deepest and most universal human desire is not hedonistic, desire for immediate happiness, but is an obscure desire for participation in this greater freedom, this more melodious harmony, of this more inclusive Self; that is, it is the desire for the perfect experience of Eternal Life. All we may know of Spirit is in these exceptional and exalted moments when the lower physical appetites are controlled and subdued, when the active intelligence is stilled, when all thought and desire are focused on the purer, freer life within, or above, or yonder. The incipient faculty for perceiving this freer life of Spirit is part of the natural soul and develops with it, but Spirit Itself is free: it is the Soul of God.

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"In conscious action the soul is constrained by a combination of two currents of energy: the psychic or thought current, and a spiritual or desire current. The apparatus for the employment of the thought current includes the senses, the brain, the endocrine glands and the nervous system. The thought current flows most easily and usefully when concerned with objective things that can be described and weighed and counted. Thought is analytic and differentiating,

it multiplies and divides, it lists and classifies; it selects and combines and recombines. The goal of thought is self-interest, the satisfaction of some felt need or sense of disharmony. Outward success, health and happiness are all the concern of thought, and are advantaged by its correct employment. Thought is tremendously creative; we become objectively and subjectively pretty much what we think. If we think evil, sickness, failure, we almost compel their realization in our body and surroundings. On the contrary, if we think goodness, gratitude, health, success, we go a long way toward possessing them.

"On the other hand, desire flows through the emotional and intuitive faculties. Desire has a most wonderful drawing power. It concerns itself with the immaterial things of beauty, harmony, goodness, truth, faith and hope. It never seeks to analyze, or differentiate, or judge; it simply desires. It is humble and unselfish and finds it easy to give and to cooperate; it is merciful and compassionate, forbearing, forgiving, comforting; it is kind and patient, humble and contented and grateful. Desire is all this because it is not so much a material energy as a spiritual principle. Therefore desire ever seeks to benefit and harmonize and unify; it draws to affection and fellowship; to meditation, to vision, to nostalgia of soul, to mystical love for the Ineffable One.

"Correct thinking, we saw, conditioned outward health, success and happiness; much more does desire create inward joy, peace and rest. Thought is a very clumsy instrument to turn inward toward Spirit; it operates best in outward modes of time and space; it is crude and unappreciative and ineffective among the finer things of Spirit. On the contrary, desire is perfectly at home in the freer realm of Spirit where faith, love, beauty, goodness, truth, have their dwelling; and in her turn, desire holds material things in light esteem and ignores them.

"Modern Psychology under the lead of Freud unites these two currents under the name of *libido sexualis*. Adler unites them as a single activity of the ego, under the concept of *will-to-power*. Jung, more carefully, enlarges the meaning of *libido* to mean *life-force*, which is practically what Bergson calls *élan vital*, and then divides it into two energy concepts, one concerned with the assertion of the ego, and one with reproduction. This comes very close to our understanding, for the thought current is energy running outward in creative expression of the ego-self, and the desire current is energy setting inward toward a new birth of harmony, unity and freedom.

"These two activities in our minds are not necessarily in conflict: the one evil, the other good: the one creating, the other tearing down,

not that. They are cooperating activities of one unified mind. They never are alone: thought always involves desire and desire involves thought. Desire on the whole is more powerful, the paramount desire we call 'will.' Volition as a separate faculty is simply the ego carrying into effect the resultant desire of the subconscious mind as it is conditioned by the thought of the conscious mind and the intuition of the superconscious mind. We always act according to this paramount desire. Both thought and desire are forever urging to action; thought toward multiplicity and variation, desire toward cooperation and unity. The more variation there is, the better, when it is balanced with cooperation. Both are active in the normal mind, the one urging, the other drawing: thought urging toward expression in body, body desiring soul. No sooner has desire been felt than thought seeks to express it in form. The perfect blending of thought and desire is LOVE.

"Thought is very Good! It is the forthgoing expression of the Father-God's loving activity. It is the Logos—the gift of the Son—through whom all things are made, that through Him the world might inherit Eternal Life. It is the paternal side of Love, the infinitely thoughtful care for His creation and for His children of the many mansions. It is not labor and travail, it is eternal delight, to be serving.

"And Desire is very Beautiful! It is Spirit, the Holy Spirit of Love, One with Itself, in infinitely active sympathy and compassion, and beauty and serenity. It is the Mother-God side of the Divine Mind, eternally seeking, drawing, winning, the many Many into harmonious oneness with Herself.

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"By analogy from physical laws of motion, which tell us that when two forces of equal strength are directly opposed there is a state of rest, we get an idea of the Principle of Love as the Godhead. If one force is stronger than another there is motion in its direction; if they are not exactly opposed there is motion in a different direction; with varying proportions of strength pulling at various angles there are innumerable tangents, circles, spirals, ellipses, parabolas, and curves of all variety; and all these are varied and conditioned by their relativity to other line of force in their vicinity. In like manner the numerical basis of vibration in sounds and color by their interweaving and blending explain all the charm and inexhaustible variety of musical harmony and visible beauty. In an analogous way, Divine Thought and Divine Desire, that are at rest in the Godhead as Love, when given particular expression go outward in lines of force that are immediately conditioned by other lines of thought moving outward and other lines of

desire drawing homeward, and by their relativity to countless other already active lines of thought and desire, outward or inward bound, as thought or desire predominate. Pythagoras was right in basing his philosophy on the science of numbers, seeing in their rhythm 'the dance of life.' Rhythm is the spiritual side of numbers; it is the music of the spheres.

"In nature we see an urge toward variation in form and function that is universal. The inconceivably vast number of variations having had their origin in the same cosmic source, can and do interweave, combine, interact, and cooperate in a never ending process of change. This process, however, is not unguided; it moves according to unchangeable laws of causation in a realm of purpose and ends developing a 'grand strategy of evolution.' Evolution and Involution are the result of the synthesis of energy as it is radiated by Divine Thought and conditioned by Divine Desire. That is '*good*' which increases and conserves cooperation in the unending process toward freedom and harmony. The struggle for existence is not an effort to get rid of competition, but is the effort to find better ways and means for mutual participation and mutual help. The '*fittest*' is the one who cooperates best. On every plane of life organisms are energized by these same currents of thought and desire, less freely on planes below, more freely

on planes of life above. Love fills the Universe with these interweaving, cooperating lines of cosmic energy; Thought going outward like sunlight, Desire drawing inward like gravitation. Both together are the Divine Consciousness integrating and evolving the Universe in a never ending Process of Change, outward bound in creative activity of Love's Thought, inward bound in Love's Desire for Response and Union. Body, soul and Spirit, are octaves of each other in that Grand Amen."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

"Every material unity has its own life cycle and its natural term; it is born, grows, reproduces, dies. Birth on every plane of life is more or less fortuitous, and nature has safeguarded her ends by providing enormously excessive possibilities. In the lower planes of life, the dangers are after birth, but as the planes advance in freedom the birth rate decreases, but the survival rate increases. In the human species, out of billions of sperm and thirty or forty thousand ova, often none are fertilized, at most only ten or twenty, and of these only a small fraction survive. Therefore the secret of the endless continuation of material bodies lies in the free course of the sex-urge to mating. To foster and protect it, everything else must give place and all the gifts and values of love and beauty and emotion are lavished upon it. Sex-love '*is like a silver lake in the mountains mirroring the loveliness of the landscape, holding the glory of the night sky in its deeps, yet, at last, pouring over its well built barrier to enrich some city with its light and warmth and power.*' The night of passion and ecstasy is always followed by the dawn of inspiration and the day of creative achievement. This does not mean that

nature desires unlimited reproduction, on the contrary she controls that ruthlessly by war, famine and pestilence, but it does mean that nothing must stand in the way of providing for a sufficient number and quality of births to carry forward this cosmic process of becoming. It indicates nature's determination that no form once unified shall ever become extinct, until it is proven beyond all doubt that it has no further co-operative usefulness. It indicates also, that every species shall have ample opportunity to improve its adaptation to environment and consequent progress toward an ever freer unity and harmony.

"Growth is the enlargement and unfolding of all living things toward an inherent term. The beginning of growth is a single fertilized cell; that divides and multiplies, gathers into colonies, and specializes into organs and faculties. At least it is convenient to think that the single cell is the beginning, but perhaps if we could watch closely enough we would see that that single cell was itself a matured self that had had its own beginning in some far off courtship of atoms. This aggregation of cells in the human body continues toward a more or less fixed limit, after which there is a gradual decrease to the time of death. To provide the material for this growth the organism must capture suitable material wherever it can find

it. Some get it from the energy of the sunlight, some from the chemical elements of the soil, some from vegetable cells, and some steal it from animal life weaker than itself. There is evidence that nature disapproves illicit slaughter of the weak by the strong, and evidently intends that all growth shall be provided for as far as possible out of the surplus reproductive material of the lower orders, according to some law of mutual participation and helpfulness. For instance, the natural food of man is eggs, milk, grains, fruit, nuts. It is plainly seen in the mutual relation of bees and flowers, alga and fungi, or the farmer and his herds and crops. It is seen in the amazing co-operation of the cells of the heart and lungs and blood and stomach and intestines, all down the line. Civil governments function best when they keep in view the same co-operative helpfulness between producers, transporters, distributors and consumers. Evolution is based on a succession of these life partnerships.

There is a similar growth of ideas on the psychic plane, also, but in the realm of ideas growth is not an accretion of lesser units toward a more or less definite term, but is an unfolding of implicitness whose term is the unified whole of the Divine Idea. The physical power of growth begins to fail at a given point, but psychical and spiritual growth, each in its appro-

priate realm, forever unfolds as its material bonds are loosened. Ideas and souls are just as real as physical bodies, only they are nearer True Reality, that is, they are less hampered, they partake of a higher degree of freedom. But on both planes, the physical and the psychical, the controlling principle is this same Cosmic Principle of Love.

Death is simply the end and breaking up of an organized physical unity, the elements of which remain as themselves unities, or are immediately seized upon by more virile organisms to be used by them in their own processes of growth. In the fortunes of the material body after death there is endless uncertainty and chance. A fragment of some broken up planet may float in space for millions of years and then suddenly be caught by the attraction of the earth to be burnt to gas and ash, only to reappear in vegetation, that may in a very few days be eaten by a cow whose milk might be drunk by some one absorbed in thoughts of love and aspiration.

"But whatever its fortune, every element is included in a series of increasingly more inclusive unities, the most inclusive of which, as far as we know, is the physical universe. There may be something inconceivably more vast, but no matter how vast it may be, it will include as elements, molecules and atoms, which in

turn are constellations of protons and electrons—and these made up of balanced lines of force with particles, inconceivably smaller than the electrons, rotating about them with the speed of light. Beyond this, who knows? But somewhere, within or yonder, is the Thought of the Divine Mind sending His messengers of Light to their appointed tasks.

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"The human body, then, is a mere aggregation of atoms and cells until something is added, some breath of life, some unifying principle. This something-added, this unifying Principle, that makes of it a living unity, is the soul, and is the thing with which we are most concerned. One is aware of soul in himself as 'a stream of consciousness.' The ordinary processes of the body go on automatically without entering into consciousness, but the soul has a very considerable influence over them by suggestion, by behavior, and by control of conditions. In the harmonious reaction of body and soul lies the health of the organism. We intuitively feel that the soul is of more noble birth than the body, and because of its superior birth has authority over the body and responsibility for its care, its nourishment, its reproduction, and especially for its progress spiritward.

"The soul is guiding the body through an universal system of causation from a more lim-

ited freedom to a higher freedom. The only opportunity a soul has for making progress toward freedom of spirit is during the short span of each individual life. It is the prime duty, therefore, for each individual soul to make the most it can of this fleeting life. Here-in lies the whole of moral responsibility: loyalty in the team-play of body and soul in the adventure spiritward. In this regard Guatama was right in seeing the significance of 'clinging to desire.' The old Hebrew tradition placed too much emphasis on sin and unrighteousness; Jesus was far wiser in placing the emphasis on Love as the unerring guide to the right path. Sin lies, if it lies anywhere, in lust and the clinging to lower physical desires and passion, oblivious to life's significance and its spiritual possibilities. Love is helping men, through the experience of trust in Love, to an ever clearing perception of what is wise and necessary for the soul's progress spiritward.

"Jesus was profoundly wise, he was a spiritual genius, when he summed up all law in the precepts: love for God, love for the neighbor, love for self. Love for God is inward, in faith and aspiration and worship. Love for the self is outward in restraint of physical desires, and inward by the encouragement of spiritual desire. Love for the neighbor is outward in co-operative good-will and service and mutual enjoyment.

"Love for the neighbor may be developed by cultivating a friendly interest in all animate life; by being kindly affectioned one toward another, in honor prefering another; by sharing in all the co-operative activities of society. It is a social duty to do one's part toward the reproduction of the species, keeping in mind the law of natural selection of the most useful, the most attractive, the best, so that in the crossing and interweaving biological gains will be made and conserved. When these duties are fulfilled there is not only freedom for play, but there is an especial value gained by entering into the mutual enjoyment of life's beauty and riches and freedom. '*He should remember that life is short and God approves of joy.*' And Jesus said, '*These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might persist, and that your joy might be full.*'

"There are two roads that lead to God: desire for the good, and love for the beautiful. Tagore says, '*God woos us by His beauty.*' It is a first duty of the soul in its love for God to develop its awareness of the purer, freer life of spirit. It can do this by cherishing from childhood a humble, grateful, trustful love of this Cosmic Principle of Love, conceived of as the Heavenly Father, who has caused all things to work together for good to those that love Him, and who is ever present to help in the soul's efforts to realize this fairer life of spirit. It can be done

by cultivating an appreciation of the beautiful in art, in nature and in conduct.

"The soul should love itself in the sense of using its superior mind for conserving the health and discipline of the body. It can do it by educating the mind; by cherishing good thoughts; by self discipline through a wise limitation of the likes and the dislikes; by guarding against the insidious dangers of pride, fear, laziness, ingratitude and lust. The conscious soul must learn to suggest and act for the lesser unities of the body, for they, too, after their kind, have 'intimations of immortality.' It is the duty of the soul to encourage the feet to run toward His Presence, the hands to reach upward, the ears to listen for the melody of His Voice, the eyes to see His face, the mind to think His thoughts. In the sense that one's sex-mate is unified with one's self, there is a prime duty to cherish her with tender affection and loving care.

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"But with the death of the body, the soul disappears just as completely as do the elements that make up the body. In the case of the body we saw that the elements recombined into new unities. But what becomes of the soul? In the case of the living body, when a wound occurs or a cell dies, the organism tends to replace the missing part. The reason that it does so is

because the memory of the missing part remains in the subconscious mind of the organism. When one dies the memory of his personality lives on in the mind of the next more inclusive unity; and that next more inclusive unity tends to replace him. This goes on progressively until in the mind of God the memory of all lesser minds is held in loving concern.

"In some obscure way the reaction of a soul to life, whether it moves with thought toward increased definition of physical life, or with desire toward unity and freedom of spirit, becomes a test of survival. There is a critical point in the balance of soul and body where a freer life of spirit emerges. This is nothing especially unique; in biology there are many such points of mutation: the emergence of life itself from so-called inorganic substances is a good example. In the relation of the soul and body, when this point is reached (and it is a point where many cosmic lines converge), there emerges a new type of life that is less cumbered with matter, or perhaps is entirely free of it. The soul that had been included in the subconscious mind of the unity next above, having reached this critical point, loses its particularity and is merged, no longer in the subconscious memory, but in the Soul of the unity next above. Dr. Mead expresses it, '*What is brought to an end is the bondage of the individual existent . . . whereby*

one is kept bound within the lower process as a part of the process.' This freer life of spirit that emerges at this critical point is what Jesus meant by, '*life eternal.*' It is a new birth not of flesh but of spirit, and reveals the further success of the desire-trend toward unity and freedom. In the language of the Buddhists, that soul '*has attained.*' To Christians the goal of God's creative activity is to secure that necessary freedom of spirit for a responsive love that would answer and satisfy His own great Love. William Blake used the symbol of '*Beulah Land*' to suggest the realm that lies intermediate between this life and eternal life. In it '*all the tenderer joys that could not endure the full blaze of Eternity come here for protection. It is the source of all inspiration, and its sorrows to us on this more sorrowful plane seem like intense joy.*' The Egyptians called it the '*Perfect Land*'; Plato, the '*world of Ideas*'; it is the *Yesod*, the archetypal world of the *Kabbalah*; the *Astral* plane of the Theosophists; the *Pure Land* and *Nirvana* of the Buddhists; and Christians call it *Heaven*. There may be many planes of life intervening between the soul and God—the Upanishads specify five soul-states: material, breath, consciousness, pure intelligence and pure joy—but ordinarily a normal response to love in a human life will free that soul for participation in the freer life of spirit in the soul-

unity that is next above the human, whatever that may be.

"It is possible for exceptional individuals by extraordinary concentration of desire, such as is seen in the lives of the mystic saints, to have been able to omit one or more of these intermediate planes and to have participated here in the higher freedom and ecstasy of spirit. We believe that Jesus, at least, passed at once into the Divine Union; Buddhists believe the same of Guatama. But certainly the normal course is for the soul by its loyalty to love on one plane, to advance at death into the 'stream of consciousness' of the soul next higher. And that would be heaven compared with this life; in its freer life our ecstasies would be the commonplace and unnoticed glow of good health; its vision, its resources, its freedom, will be incomparably greater and its delights inconceivably more exquisite. But the final goal remains, unity of the soul in God.

"Certain lives may have lived so negatively and worldly that the soul fails to reach this critical point where soul goes free and, at the death of the body, must remain '*in the process as a part of the process*,' that is, '*earth bound*.' In other words, its memory remains in the subconscious mind of its higher Soul to reappear again in the flesh. The Buddhists would express it by saying, '*its Karma still conditions its*

rebirths.' Jesus said, "*Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life and few there be that find it.*" And yet the gate is open and the way is free to all who search for it in sincerity and love. At death these earth-bound souls do not go backward; they may remain stationary or advance very slowly, but the great principle of creation is a process of becoming ever more free and spiritual; the current forever sets in that direction, and Love never tires. Any thought of a sinful soul transmigrating at death to become the soul of an animal in its next rebirth is unnatural and fantastic. There is no analogy for it in biology; there is reversion to type, but no known instance of reversion to a lower order.

"In the Divine Mind there are innumerable 'body-ideas' that are capable of further integration: In Divine Desire there is immeasurable faith and love and patience. It is the province of the Love Principle to bring these body-ideas and earth-bound souls together. It is not done arbitrarily: that is, every body-idea determines its own measure of soul.

"It would be interesting to know what is the deciding factor in the determination of the sex of the new life. Scientists generally agree that at the very first there is no sex differentiation, but it comes very soon after. Observers have noted that the time when conception takes place in the

periodicity of the mother's rhythm appears to influence sex; the matter of the poverty or richness of nutrition enters in; and the general condition of society,—wars, famines, pestilences; and there is the relative potency of father and mother; but all of these are proximate influences; down deeper are the great cosmic influences of Divine Thought and Divine Desire. Sex is the device for securing variation and survival of the fittest organism; it is also the device for securing the gradual extinction of selfish egoism, by showing to the opposing sex an object of spontaneous and immediate love.

"One may fancy that Divine Thought and Divine Desire debate at each new impregnation; Thought saying: "This is mine,—I need boys brave, assertive, resourceful, for the evolution of the body." And Desire answering: "And I need girls to win the race for more unselfish receptiveness and self-giving and cooperation and patience. I need *girls* with their greater sensitiveness to beauty, their intuition of spiritual wonder and delight." But on the whole I think the deciding factor is less fortuitous and more automatic. Soul in its essential nature has no sex differentiation, that ends with physical bodies and time and space; but it is essential that in the long, long development of each body-idea in its progress spiritward, that it shall have equal opportunity for development under conditions

of masculinity and femininity. This does not mean that each alternate child will be male and female; it means that each *body-idea* is alternately incarnated in boy and girl, and in each successive incarnation the equilibrium tips toward both closer physical adaptation and a finer awareness of spirituality.

Desire broods over the impregnated ovum and a new life cycle is begun with all its wider opportunities for growth and freedom. Again a child is born; the father works, the mother gives, and together they are happy in their present love and future hope.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

As the hour was late and as Grace and the Rector were to remain another day, it was decided to postpone the balance of David's talk until the following evening.

During the next day the Rector went with David to see the work that had been accomplished in the woods. Grace spent the day with Ailene watching the precious baby and telling about her own that had been left with its grandma. They talked over at length their past, present and future hopes and desires. Grace told of the disappointment that she had at first experienced in her marriage, which she now felt sure was caused by the Rector's too great absorption in his ministry, and how much happier they had been since they had been able to share together the work and companionship of the new parish. She said that she recognized that the present parish did not make full demand on the Rector's capacity, but it had given them the necessary time and opportunity to become adjusted to each other, which their stay in New York had prevented. She said that the Rector had received some very complimentary letters from old friends because of his course in giving up the rich church to undertake the more diffi-

cult and less conspicuous place in the country. She referred to one letter especially that had come from the Rector's old friend, the Bishop in the North-West who had tried to pursuade the Rector to come with him. In this letter the Bishop had referred to his age and failing health and hinted at the possibility of the appointment of an associate Bishop, and if it came to pass he wished the Rector would consider a call to be his associate.

Then Ailene told of her very great happiness. She said they had spent many evenings absorbed in the study of the writings of the old mystics to see which of them had had intuitions of an Over-soul. Then to balance that, they had tried to keep abreast of the new revelations of modern science. She spoke of David's enjoyment of his forestry work. She said that a neighbor of theirs, a very wealthy New York banker who owned thousands of acres of wild land back in the hills, had become interested in David's success and had asked him to take charge of his forest properties, also. He had been so pleased with the result that he had recently asked David to join a group of bankers in New York who owned extensive tracts of virgin forest in Louisiana and Oregon. With the invitation had come a suggestion that David join him on trips of inspection, suggesting that if convenient he would like to have Ailene accompany them so that his daughter, who was a

college graduate with athletic proclivities, could go along too. They were planning to go the following winter on the first of these trips.

They sat silent for a time thinking of their unfolding lives, then without introduction Grace said naively, "How wonderful men are,—our men, I mean, aren't they? They have such a business-like way of bringing their ideas into expression. How helpless we would be without them."

Ailene answered smilingly, "Yes, but how blind and blundering they are without our eyes to see for them and our ideals to inspire them. We are very fortunate in our husbands, Grace, but we need them and they need us if we are to find success and happiness."

"Well, I need Frank, I know that. When I can get him to take off his ministerial clothes, he's awfully nice. Oh Ailene, he has such sentient hands, and he's so gentle and tender; he just carries me off my feet every time he touches me."

"I understand, Grace. David is my heart's delight, too. I like him because he's so strong. He doesn't realize often how strong he is, and it sometimes hurts a little—unless I hug back. But I don't speak of it any more, because I cautioned him once and he stopped; I didn't want him to do that. He has such a curious mind. When I think, I want to go straight to the mark, but he likes to let his mind meander.

I love to lie in his arms and watch his mind work. Sometimes it seems to leave his body and go off wandering in some fair land of fantasy, that isn't so unreal after all, for he brings back most beautiful bouquets of thought-flowers, and visions that he has seen; a lot of it is pure vagary, and then some of it is wonderfully true and illuminating. I often wish he would take me with him on these excursions. If he stays away too long, I pinch him and make him come back to earth. But we oughtn't to be talking so much about our husbands. Let's talk about babies. I don't see how you can bear to go off and leave yours; you are fortunate to have a grandmother to leave it with. But even then I should worry all the time I was away. I'm awfully jealous of mine,—and he is mine, even more than he is David's and I can't bear to give him up to anyone."

"I feel that way a little, too, but not so much as you do, Ailene. You see I was so old I had an awful time getting mine, and when I got back strength enough to know what I was about, my first thought was for Frank. When the nurse called my attention to baby, my second thought was, 'Won't Frank be pleased.' No, Frank comes ahead of baby in *my* heart."

"Oh Grace, you know David doesn't swear, at least not very often, only when things go wrong at the saw-mill, then he uses frightful

language and gives the men an awful dressing down. One day, when he was watching baby nurse, he didn't say anything for a long time, then he burst out, 'The *damn* little kid.' My, but I love him."

"Whom do you mean, Ailene, David or the baby? And who's talking about husbands now, I would like to know?"

"Come, Grace, we *must* stop. Let's lay aside our sewing and go out to the barn, I want to show you the dearest little Guernsey bossy you ever set eyes on."

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That evening after supper the Rector opened the way for David to continue his talk, by asking, "Do you think, David, that life in lower orders or on a lower plane must climb all the successive hills before they can reach God and rest?"

David replied that life was not at all discouraging because of that. "Take our own case: human life is reasonably happy, it is not a hardship for anyone to live this life, unless of course, one is suffering pain or oppression. As we become old, also, we all of us begin to cherish thoughts of heaven and its freer life of spirit, but ordinarily we are quite content to remain here. It is only the few choice souls that catch a glimpse of a better life and desire it sufficiently to pay the price of self-restraint that is necessary to find the strait and narrow way that leads to a higher

life. It is the same on every plane of life as far as we can see. Birds and bees and all wild life appear to be quite content with their lot in nature's warm sunshine. Flowers and all vegetables drink in the warm rain with delight and are apparently happy in the companionship of their own kind. We think that because they have less freedom than we that *therefore* they must be very discontented, but that does not at all follow. While it is true that each plane of life is a stepping stone to a higher life of wider freedom and increased appreciation of beauty and delight, each within its possibilities, its gifts, its talents, its limits, is equally noble and happy and content. But there are those on each level who catch a glimpse of the vision and to whom the next higher life seems like heaven and who desire to attain it. For these choice souls the way of advance is open and it is the same on all planes of life: it is simple loyalty to Love. Shelley expressed this in the couplet:

'*The spirit of the worm beneathe the sod.*
In love and worship, blends itself with God.'

"To go inward toward Love there are no barriers or distance. Love is the same wherever it radiates, in highest mansion or lowest, or in the Mind of God. Our conscious love for the Heavenly Father is no more sure and quick to find its home in Him than is sincere desire

within its limits and according to ability on what we are in the habit of calling the lower planes of existence. But to be loyal to Love to the full measure of ability is a difficult thing to do. The soul is hedged about by all sorts of limits and entanglements, for many of which she is not responsible, such as accidents, calamities and chance, and for others of which she is responsible, such as selfishness, laziness, pride, excess. The old-fashioned idea of Divine anger and punishment is incompatible with our present idea of a Cosmic Principle of Love. Jesus' conception of God as Heavenly Father provides for the natural consequences of unwise choice, but has no place for eternal punishment. Divine Love never fails in its sympathy and help and final triumph.

"In all the difficulties of life, Love is the one sure and wise guide and help. Love can be trusted to provide the maximum measure of light, strength, and happiness under every circumstance. Love clarifies the vision, increases strength, removes subconscious inhibitions, lessens needs, removes difficulties, assuages pain; and when difficulties still remain, Love helps one to meet them with faith and courage, with hope and good-will, with serenity and laughter; until the very difficulties become aids to a more disciplined character and a higher type of life. But whatever the failure or success, a normal loyalty to Love carries the soul at the death of the body

into the Soul of the next higher and more inclusive Life.

"There are rare instances of men and women who have loved their Divine Lord so intensely and exclusively that they have received during life most extraordinary visions and have experienced most marvelous ecstasies and raptures which they believe to be a foretaste of an ultimate unitive life with Him. Those who have had this experience agree that it is a change from the limited life of sense perception to a life of indescribable freedom and beauty and rapture. They assert that it is not an intensification of this life, but is a genuine transcendence: a passing from perception of things by the senses to an awareness of participation in the Divine Immanence. This transcendent experience during the natural life of these exceptional mystical geniuses appears to be an anticipation of what is to be the normal and permanent experience of all those, who having trusted Love during this life, are to enjoy after the death of the body in a higher life of spirit. But a foretaste of it in this life is not attained by the great mystics without tremendous cost and effort. There are violent alternations of light and darkness, joy and dismay; there is awakening followed by doubt, discipline by discouragement, illumination by 'the dark night,' but crowned at last by an

experience of the bliss of the Unitive Life with their Lord.

"An English mystic, the author of '*The Prodigal Returns*,' has recently described her most wonderful experiences in the search for her Divine Lover, and she enlarges on these violent alternations of rapture and discouragement; then she speaks of nature mystics as being content with a half-way experience of rapture. As one reads the book there comes the feeling that this course of violent and excessive hatred of sin and desire for love, which she in her life illustrates, is a kind of unnatural *tour de force*. One wonders whether in the life after death she will have any higher experience than comes to those who have here lived a more normal life of loyalty to Love.

"A humble, grateful recognition of the soul's dependence on Divine Love, in a normal life of kindness and good-will toward others, and of aspiration and love for the Heavenly Father is certainly more to be desired, and will, in the long run, be to the better advantage of the self and of far more advantage to the neighbor and the family. Jesus says explicitly that the reward of eternal life is for those who in a life of love are kind to the least of His brethren. Jesus came into the world to reveal the Way of Eternal Life. It was the Way of Love. It was called the Good News because it was so in contrast with the

prevailing thought of the people of His day. They thought that God was an implacable Judge who would visit the sins unto the fourth generation by eternal punishment, except in the case of the elect. Jesus said that the Way of Life is the Way of Love, and we best follow that Way, not by belief in creedal and dogmatic statements, not by any excessive and exaggerated sense of sin, not by any intense and concentrated passion for a Divine Lover, but by a simple, normal, child-like trust in love and kindness as the Way of Life."

Grace asked, "David, do you think that we shall recognize our friends after death? Can we communicate with them now?"

David replied that he thought not. "Particular bodies and souls at death lose their individuality. Bodies disappear in new combinations of matter; souls, if earth-bound, remain in the subconscious memory of which they are already a part to reappear in appropriate rebirths. If souls have fulfilled the normal reaction to Love, they immediately advance into the stream of consciousness of the next higher Soul and lose their lower particularity. One cares little to see the bodies, anyway. They were very imperfect and changing at best. Even the soul-personality, whose memory we cherish, carried so much that was obscure and imperfect and trying that we begin at once to idealize it; the soul that we

really desire to see again is a redeemed and purified one. If the soul at death is free to enter the next higher Soul, it is at once so immeasurably above us in freedom, wisdom and inclusiveness that, while we are still in the flesh, we could get only a hint of His surpassing Presence. But this hint we do receive. It comes not in shape of ghostly body or words of automatic writing, it comes in an intangible glow that suggests love and joy and beauty. It comes in the uplift of those rare moments of vision when we are inspired by the beauty of nature, the serene stillness of the night, or in the quiet of meditation. It comes, as Mary felt it in her dreams, as the vast and obscure 'form' of her more inclusive self. Our own conscious soul includes myriads of these lesser souls, who through love have transcended their lower planes of life to become merged in our own soul-life. We are not conscious of their origin or former selfhood, and we can not imagine that they know each other; they have become a part of our unified stream of consciousness. The glow of their tiny light is merged in our brighter light; their soul has become our soul, they see with our eyes, they desire as we desire, they worship as we worship. We are their true self. And we, if we have been true to Love, when we die, we but awake into our larger Life.

"In our superconsciousness, in those excep-

tional moments of which we have spoken, we become aware of this next higher Soul. We may speak of our *own* soul, we may not speak of our *own* spirit, for all the spirit we get a hint of is this very limited appreciation of the Soul next higher. The new relationship that we enter into at the death of the body, after we have been loyal to Love in the previous life, will be an advance into the Soul of Him of whom we are now a subconscious part, and of which we formerly had obscure hints in our superconscious minds. At death those who have loved Love will have transcended this mortal life. In what plane they shall awake remains to be seen; but whether in the next, or the next, ultimately we shall awake in His Likeness. We shall have become unified in the Divine Soul and shall experience the states of His Consciousness. We may not enter the sanctuary of His Spirit: that is the Godhead; it is for Him alone! But as One with His Soul, we shall know as we are known. Yonder, in the secret of His Presence, shall be our recognition of Friends. There we shall see their beloved characteristics now perfected, not in different celestial forms, but blended into One and that One altogether Lovely. The Form that we shall see at the awakening will not be the shape of our Lord, but will be a self awareness of the glory and the beauty of the Divine Health. '*The thought of*

deeply mingling at death with the life of others,' presents a lovely face. It seems only an enlargement of the process that all loving sets up: the process of escaping from self by absorption into another life.' It is the process of escaping from a little self, a temporal, phenomenal self, into awareness of a freer and transcendental Selfhood. It is the merging and blending of many colored lights into one pure white."

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The Rector remarked, "You have made the journey of the soul to her home in God very clear: can you tell us how the soul gets to her particular place in life?"

David replied, "The soul that has attained Love, the Pure Land of the Divine Soul, now being one with Him sees all things as He sees them: that is, as functions and states of His own Soul, which carries with it among other things a great illumination. As Thomas Vaughan wrote, *'Again he that enters the center shall know why all influx of fire descends, against the nature of fire, and comes from heaven downward. He shall know, also, why the same fire, having found a body, ascends again toward heaven and grows upward.'* In His perfect sight all the mansions of life are transparent; all the living, loving and being loved, suffering and rejoicing and dying, are rhythms of His own consciousness. All the thoughts, ideas, visions and desires are the ebb

and flow of His own Mind and Heart. There are no dearest ones or favorites, for all are equally near and precious in His sight.

"There are the imperfect and unlovely things on the lower planes, which to those entangled in them are very real and fearful, but in His sight are largely illusion and unnecessary and transitory; they are only incidental in a process of causation in a universe of time and space. He knows that if Love had been trusted and had been given free course, most of the troubles might have been avoided. All the poverty, the war, the misery, the sickness, all might have been avoided if Love had been trusted. But all the bafflement, the fear, the pain, is known by the Heavenly Father and has the Divine sympathy and compassion.

"But that which is normal and characteristic of life, the joy, the zest, the contentment, the laughter of children, the caresses of lovers, the singing of birds, the fragrance of flowers, the refreshing rain, the warm sunlight, are very delightsome to Him and constitute the Divine Joy and Satisfaction. The self-giving of love, faithful unrewarded service, the hidden desire of the lonely and heart hungry, serenity under adversity, the steadiness of those who in the face of defeat are brave and hopeful, all, *all* are very important in the sight of the Heavenly Father and command the adequate help of His Love.

And what is true on the human plane is true on all planes; Love broods over all.

"In the marvelous Eighth Tractate of the Fourth Ennead, Plotinus discusses this very question: how the Soul of the Divine—indivisible in the harmonious unity of its essential Nature—can descend into the realm of sense and find its apparently divided home in body. He refers to the teachings of Heraclitus, Empedocles and Pythagoras, all of whom looked upon it as a descent, a desertion, a punishment, a slavery to a raving discord. Then he comes to the noble thoughts of Plato, his master, who in so many places dwelt upon its mystery. 'Plato,' he says, '*Everywhere expresses contempt for all that is of sense, blames the commerce of soul with body as an enchainment, an entombment, and upholds as a great saying of the Mysteries that the soul is here a prisoner . . . .In the Phaidros he makes a failing of the wings the cause of the (soul's) entry into this realm—and there are periods which send back the soul even after it has risen—there are judgments, and fates, and lots and necessities, driving other souls down to this order. In all these explanations he (Plato) finds guilt in the arrival of the soul at body.*'

"Nevertheless, Plotinus shows that Plato by the general terms of his philosophy, makes the sense world and the souls that inhabit it, each

possessed of their appropriate share in the Divine Soul, to the end that the entire totality of things might be possessed of spirituality, something that could only be accomplished by the ministry of soul penetrating every individual body in the sense-world and lifting it into beauty and freedom. Plato, and after him, Plotinus, while positing some blameworthiness to account for the soul's descent, makes it, once down, the foothold for a glorious ascent spiritward. If the fall from participation in the Divine Nature into body was punishment, it then had the noble privilege of using its hold on the Divine Nature to give form and beauty to body, and by its loyalty to its own Divine ancestry to win again its original spiritual freedom and unity with the Divine.

"It is hard for any one to imagine the participation of the soul in body, with all its irksome restraint and needs and burdens as being unconnected with some form of retribution, but nevertheless, to me, it is wonderfully clear that just as the ascent toward the Divine is the noble privilege of soul, a thousand times more noble is the self-giving of the Divine Self in conscious Thought for the need of 'the least of these my children.' The soul finds its place in body, in atom, in constellation, always and only as Divine Love focuses its particular Thought on that particular need. But no

particular Thought of the Divine Nature expressed in the soul of some far away creature is ever entirely severed from its participation in that Divine Nature, and at once the soul's sincere desire wings its way back again to its home in Divine Love.

"The task which has been given to that particular Divine Thought may be overwhelming, but so long as the soul fixes its eye on its Divine origin and lives tranquilly in its ability to love, so long can it never be kept from its home in the Divine. It is true that in the hand to hand task of Divine Thought the ministrant soul must needs take on something of the limitation and pains of the lower order and risk its hold on the higher, but no form of service, or untoward condition, need jeopardize its own sure standing and fellowship in the Highest. Loyal to its task by its gift of love, soul brings beauty and freedom to the body it blesses by its presence, and when its term is ended, it flies back unimpeded to its primal home in Divine Love.

"And even the earth-bound soul need feel no shame in its slowness of ascent, for its very earth-bound condition and sluggish movement reveals the very extremity of its task, and the greater trust with which Divine Thought has commissioned it. To that extent its very attenuated hold on the Divine Self, is its higher rank

and honor. As Jesus said, "*There is more joy in heaven among the angels over one sinner that repents*"—no, a thousand times, no, that triumphs!—"*than over the ninety and nine righteous that need no repentance.*"

"Divine Love is a Golden Fountain that is forever drawing into its healing, purifying reservoirs the far scattered rills of desire; and is forever pouring forth its refreshing, cheering, comforting, inexhaustible streams to purify, to illumine, to beautify.

"Divine Love is the splendor of an all-embracing, streaming, radiating, vibrant Glory, whose corona reaches to endless limits. It is indescribably beautiful in its many colored, exultant, radiant energy; as Its inexhaustible abundance expands in endless creative expression; and, as it envelops all that has been, is, and ever shall be, in one jubilant, tumultuous, unlimited, all-comprehending Joyousness. '*The Thought of God is as the sunshine to the world.*' Its splendor is forever shining on that which is not yet divine. It is wondrously beautiful as It envelops in Its immaterial Glory all without distinction: all the tiny selfnesses of particularities that are yet to unfold in the warmth of Its Splendor and ultimately to rest in Its Unity.

"Divine Love is at Its Heart a vast unfathomable Abyss, a central calm and peace of balanced energies in undifferentiated, unknowable

Purity and Beauty. Its unseen but pervasive gravitation is forever drawing and winning all multiplicity into the restful tranquility of Its perfect and harmonious Unity, wherein all selfness and personality are fused into one blissful and serene Soul-Consciousness, in which '*the Soul is Itself the Union*.'

Beyond, enfolding and interpenetrating all, is still the uncreate Aureole of The Spirit of Love, which is Love's contemplation and intuition of Himself. Love in His Godhead is Alone! But it is of the essence of Love, even of Love as the *First*, to desire Love's Response, and to rejoice in Love's Self-giving. From this Primal Source, Love impelled, issues the never beginning and never ending Process of Becoming.

"Again the soul takes individual form, to think, to love, to serve, to give, to win, in the ever circling Process of Becoming. Again in Eternal Recurrence, the soul is drawn back again into the unity of the Divine Soul, to be once more and eternally once again, enraptured in the Beatific Vision of Love Ineffable."

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The Rector and Grace were to remain at the bungalow, but David and Ailene were to return home. As they came from the brightly lighted room they were surprised by the darkness of the night. In the distance there were frequent flashes of lightning, while the wind was moaning in fitful

gusts in the tree tops. David said that they must hurry or the storm would overtake them.

On the way Ailene said, "During your talk tonight, David, I thought if you had lived in the olden days, you would have been a recluse. How thankful I am that in the dream of your mother you were given an incentive to search, and in Mary's dreams you were given a clue to follow. Love has been to you, indeed, a 'Candle of Vision.'

"But it is your love, Ailene, that guides our steps and fills the way with delight. O, it is fine to love and to be loved! How beautiful it makes the world seem. You know that I have always loved the woods at night, but tonight they seem more companionable than ever; listen to their voices, they are troubled now by the coming storm. And among the dark clouds, how clear and brilliant the stars are; they are untroubled because they are above the storm, they understand."

"Yes, David but I like best the vision you gave us of the inner, freer life of spirit. It grows nearer, more lovable, more abounding, than this outer world. At first I didn't want to give up the idea of meeting our friends after death, but now that I understand, I am beginning to see possibilities of a more perfect satisfaction. It is a wonderful thought, that the soul that has loved much, at the death of the body is free to merge into the fullness of a more inclusive Self,

therein to recognize others, not as apart from itself, but as their very own self. I'd so love to be conscious of myself as including you, David. It is a satisfaction also, to think that Love and beauty and truth and joy are all part and parcel of Eternal Life; that God is not only the Source of All, but All remains in Him. I feel as though our love was bringing us to some Delectable Mountain, from which we may see the Celestial City."

As they came to the gateway to the Pond Woods where the road enters the highway, they saw the black clouds massing tumultously overhead, and the rumble of the approaching storm could be plainly heard. David said, "We will hardly have time to reach the house before the storm breaks. It will be only a brief storm, mostly thunder and wind,—something that I love,—let us crouch under the shelter of these pines, and let it blow over. I love the shelter of these woods, and the storm and wind, with all their bluster, are friendly; they will do us no harm."

There in the darkness and the shelter, Ailene crouched at David's side, his arm about her, her face against his shoulder. "Oh, David, how good it is to be with you, so safe when all about is storm and tumult. It makes me want to merge my life with yours, forever. Hold me close, Beloved."

A roll of thunder reverberated not far away.

"You are so deliciously strong, you almost hurt . . . that's better . . . This morning, David, Grace and I were talking about our men; she boasted of Frank's speaking hands, and told how she liked to have them wander over her body. I boasted of you, and said that I liked best just to rest in the strength of your arms."

Another roll of thunder almost upon them.

Out of the silence that followed came a little exclamation of delight. ". . . Here, my dress is loose, slip your hand inside. . . . Ah-a—Davey . . . sweet."

Another rattle of thunder closer than ever, and gusts of wind lashing the tree tops.

"Do you think we are safe here, David? No I'm not afraid with you, but I wish we were home in bed. . . . Your hand is so nice, it thrills me . . . I just love it." . . . A soft happy laugh rippled out from the darkness. "Oh, David, I love you so. The physical joy of the touch of your hand seems to speed me on to a more satisfying rapture of spirit; I seem to forget its momentary thrill in a wonder of spiritual delight. Our love seems so beautiful, so illuminating, so uniting. Kiss me, David."

She placed her hand on his shoulder and lifted her glowing face to his. He drew his hand from the bosom of her dress to press her more closely to him, and with the kiss their souls . . .

The tempest was upon them. A blinding flash of glory scintillated about them, the shriek of a splintered tree, the deafening crash of thunder, the swish of beating rain, mingled in a wild resounding tumult. Then as the noise died away in the distance, it seemed to dissolve into the music of another world: angel voices singing a wedding march:

"Love now triumphant forever unites."

"My, Ailene, that was near! It must have struck a tree over by the ledge; I am glad we weren't under it, but I'm too good a woodsman to seek shelter during a thunderstorm under a tree that is taller than its fellows. Besides, Love wouldn't have let such a thing happen. Love is a guiding and protecting influence, and when it is trusted Love always brings good sense and health and happiness,—never harm. But Ailene, why do you tremble and hold me so tightly? I don't wonder you were frightened, but the storm is over now."

"Oh, Davey, I've had such a beautiful vision. In the midst of all that clash and tumult my soul seemed carried away into the heart of it where there was only peace and quiet. For a second my soul seemed poised above the earthly confusion, in a realm of glory and perfect serenity and it was all rhythmic with life and meaning

and purpose. The indescribable peace that flooded my soul did not seem to be in contrast with the sweet delight of the physical body a few moments ago; it seemed more to be the same delight only infinitely more expanded and radiant and free and satisfying. The physical delight came to me through my senses and thrilled my separateness, but in this flash of exquisite wonder, I seemed to realize myself and you and everybody and everything, and all glory and beauty and love, as merged into One Perfect Whole. Oh Davey, we must never lose sight of Love; it is our Clue to That."

THE CLUE

Life is impermanent,
But carries the secret
Of immortality.
It is this:
Love, Beauty, Truth,
Are immortal;
If cherished,
The soul shares
Their immortality.
Entrust the secret
To another.
Life is impermanent!

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